

MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

December, 1949

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MONTAIGNE AND THE EMBLEMS OF JAKOB CATS

By LEWIS THORPE

The three books of *Emblemata* or *Minne-Beelden*¹ of Jakob Cats were first published in one volume in Middelburg in the year 1618. It would be easy to overstate the intrinsic importance of these emblem books, considered either as one of the many literary productions of their famous author or, a fortiori, as representative works of the golden century of Dutch literature. Beside, say, the *Houwelyck* published by Cats in 1625, his *Trou-Ringh* of 1637, or the autobiographical *Ouderdom, Buytenleven en Hofgedachten op Zorgh-vliet* of 1656, the emblem books appear almost as juvenilia; and certainly if he had written nothing else, Cats would rank far below such of his contemporary poets and prose writers of the golden century as Hooft, Bredero, Huygens, and Joost van den Vondel. Viewed in their proper setting, however, the *Emblemata* are far from unimportant. They represent the first published literary production of a writer who was to be most widely read in his own country throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and who is still spoken of there with reverence and affection today. Their immediate popularity is proved by the swift succession of complete or partial editions in 1620 (?), 1624, 1628, 1630 (?), and 1633, while English translations were printed as recently as 1860 and 1862. Their importance in the general development of emblem books has been stressed recently by Dr. Rosemary Freeman,² although her interest lies in the engravings rather than in the text.

¹ The title page of the first book reads: "SILENVS / ALCIBIADIS, / SIVE / PROTEVS, / Vitae humanae ideam, Emblemata / trifarium variatio, oculis subijciens [sic]. / Deus nobis haec otia fecit. / MIDDELBVRGI, / Ex Officina Typographica Iohannis / Hellenij, Anno M. DC. XVIII. / Cum Privilegio." One is reminded vaguely of the prologue to *Gargantua*: "Silenes estoient jadis petites boites, telles que voyons de present es boutiques des apothicaires, peintes au dessus de figures joyeuses et frivoles, comme de harpies, satyres, oisons bridés, lievres cornuz, canes bastées, boucs volans, cerfs limonniers, et autres telles peintures contrefaites à plaisir, pour exciter le monde à rire. . ."

² I quote, with permission, from page 46 of Dr. Freeman's *English Emblem Books* (London, 1948): "The pictures of Jacob Cats's emblems formed one of the early models of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who owned a copy of Vaenius's emblems from Horace as well—presumably also for the sake of their engravings. Cats's emblems gave much more scope to the artist than did those of other Dutch writers like Heinsius and Vaenius because they were not concerned with the Ovidian theme of Cupid but with aspects of social and domestic life. 'Father Cats' as he was called, shared the interests of the Dutch interior painters: his emblems show scenes of family life, a housewife in the kitchen with her maid, illustrating the English proverb: 'A little pot is soon hot,' a man and a woman playing battledore and shuttlecock, with the motto, *Amor, ut pila, vices exigit*, incidents in the streets, or in the country. The central figure is often highly emblematic but the pictures still have carefully detailed naturalistic backgrounds. Cats's work was known in England and there was an attempt to translate some of it by Thomas Heywood in *Pleasant Dialogues and Drammas*, a hotch-potch of verse dialogues, elegies, emblems and epitaphs drawn from various sources and translated."

The purpose of the present article is not, however, to consider the merits either of Cats's illustrations or of his poetry. Rather it is to show the debt which Cats owed in his *Emblemata* to the essays of Michel de Montaigne, and, more specifically, to one particular essay in one particular edition.³ The knowledge and admiration of Montaigne implied by these borrowings was far from unusual in the Holland of the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries. There is ample evidence that such men as Lipsius and Vaenius read and admired the essays, and indeed the Leyden edition of 1602 represented the first printing of the essays outside France. As will be shown in the following pages, to the names of Lipsius and others may now be added that of Jakob Cats.

The general scheme followed by Cats in the *Emblemata* was to take some proverbial saying, preferably one that was applicable to the love relationship between men and women, and to illustrate it on the versos of his pages with parallel poems in Dutch, Latin, and French, the rectos then being devoted to an etching on the same theme followed by one or more pertinent quotations from Latin or French authors. This method Cats followed systematically throughout the fifty-one emblems of the first book. It was varied for the fifty-one emblems of each of the second and third books in that the etchings on the rectos were replaced by short parallel discourses in Latin and French prose. Bound in with these three books in the 1618 first edition is a fourth compilation by Cats known as the *Maechden-plicht* and consisting of a further fifty-four emblems with this new variation that, whereas the etchings and the quotations reappear on the rectos, the versos consist of proverbial sayings in both Dutch and French, followed by parallel versions in Dutch and Latin of dialogues on the mysteries of love as explained by two experts, Anna and Phyllis.⁴

³ At the risk of being accused of a priori reasoning, I anticipate the findings of my final paragraphs by stating here that the edition in question is the 1595 one, and the essay quoted the fifth one of the third book, entitled "Sur des vers de Virgile." This essay is far from being one of the best of Montaigne's output. It has been condemned by Dr. A. Armaingaud in the words: "A propos de quelques vers de Virgile qu'il commentera en effet, Montaigne s'est livré ici à une cynique débauche d'esprit qui ferait aujourd'hui traiter ce chapitre de pornographie. . . ." (See his edition of 1927, Vol. 5, p. 121.) Taking as his text those lines of the eighth book of the *Aeneid* in which Virgil describes the transports of Vulcan in the arms of Venus, Montaigne wanders with characteristic freedom and frankness through most aspects of sexual love, both within the bonds of matrimony and without, basing much of what he has to say upon his own experience. Armaingaud is perhaps a little too squeamish; but Montaigne foresaw that he was about to shock. "Je m'ennuie que mes essais servent les dames de meuble commun seulement, et de meuble de sale. Ce chapitre me fera du cabinet."

⁴ The title page of the *Maechden-plicht* reads: "MAECHDEN-PLICHT / OFTE / AMPT DER IONCK-VROV- / WEN, IN EERBAER LIEFDE, / AEN-GHEWESEN / DOOR / SINNE-BEELDEN. / OFFICIVM / Puellarum, in castis Amoribus, / Emblemata expressum. / TOT MIDDELBVRGH, / Ghedruckt by Hans van der Hellen, / wonende op de Merct in de fransche Galeye. / ANNO M. DC. XVIII. / Cum Privilegio." The British Museum possesses a separately bound copy of the *Maechden-plicht*, dated "1618 (?)."

The first book of the *Emblemata* is equipped with prefaces in Latin and Dutch, and the second with a short address "Ad Lectorem," explaining in general terms that the genre was practiced by the ancients—Graeci primo, deinde Latini, Graecos imitati, genus hoc scriptiois *Emblemata* indigitarunt—and making the point that its message is not perhaps as superficial as one might at first imagine.⁵ Finally, the four books are each accompanied by a wealth of *elogia* by different authors in the three languages concerned.⁶

For the modern reader, unless he be a specialist in early seventeenth-century emblems, the quotations themselves have more interest than the epigrammatic advice which the compiler has to offer. An analysis of the passages quoted to reinforce the fifty-one emblems of the first book reveals that they are 107 in number. Two are given in the Greek of Hesiod and Euripides: and a number of others in the Latin translation of Euripides, Herodotus, Aristotle, Polybius, and Plutarch. Liberal use is made of such native Latin writers as Plautus, Terence, Cicero, Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Seneca, and Tacitus: while four quotations are taken from the Latin of the Old Testament, and nine from the Latin of the early Christian fathers. There

⁵ The compiler's debt to the Latin *Emblemata* of Andrea Alciati (1531) is not specifically recognized. Cats quotes Alciati several times, and, in his *elogium* to Book I, Daniel Heinsius is more explicit:

... Alciati curas & seria vicerat antè
CATZIUS: ad lusus nunc & amoena meretur,
Hic quoque, sed triplici palmam sermone meretur,
Ut ter victor, qui semel ante fuit.

⁶ One of the most interesting of these *elogia* is a typical sonnet by Joshua Sylvester:

AV
Tres-digne d'Honneurs & Bon-heurs
Le Tres-docte Signeur
IAQUES CATS, I. C.
Sonnet Encomiastique;
Sur ses EMBLEMES tripliques.

Mon Dieu m'ayant osté mon loysir de jadis
(Quand je rendois Angloiz du BARTAS & sa Race)
J'avoiz ja dict Adieu aux Dames de Pernasse;
Pour mieux m'accommoder a Ceux a qui je suis.
Mais, nonobstant ce Voeu, me retenir ne puis
De maintefoiz mirer, & admirer la grace
Des Chantres grave-gayz, dont la voix haute-basse
Tire de Terre au Ciel les bien-nayz beaux Esprits.
Tel, tel es tu, mon Doux-docte-divin de CATS,
Qui, en foi Medicin, sucrant, durant tes Doses,
Fais avaller aux Tiens saines & saintes Choses,
Dont, sanz cest Art, grand part taster ne voudroit pas,
Pourtant, si bien meslant avec de Doux l'Utile,
Triple Laurier J'appends a ton Tri-lingue Stile.

I have been unable to trace a reprint of this sonnet in the collected works of Sylvester. It does not appear, for instance, in the omnibus volume printed by Humphrey Lownes, Bread Street Hill, London, 1621, despite the printer's statement: "I have carefully fetcht together all the dispersed issue of that divine Wit; as those which are well worthie to live (like brethren) together under one fair rooffe, that may both challenge time and outweare it." Sylvester, it should be noted, died in Middelburg on September 28, 1618.

is one curious section of seven lines of Latin from Saxo Grammaticus: and then a series of passages from such contemporary or almost contemporary Latinists as Filippo Beroaldo, Erasmus, Andrea Alciati, and Daniel Heinsius. In the midst of this welter of Greek and Latin erudition lie hidden two short vernacular sentences from the essays of Montaigne, both of them acknowledged as coming from Book III, Essay 5, "Sur des vers de Virgile."

Emblem XXXVII of Book I bears the Latin title "Post tristia, dulcor," this being rendered by Cats into French as "Après tourment, contentement." His French poem on the subject reads:

Vn iour ie me plaignois estant aupres ma belle
De mon penible amour, ie la nommois cruelle:
Tay toy (ce me dict-on) le linge ne se ioint,
Si preallablement on ne le blesse & point.

This theme is supported by two quotations, the first coming from Ovid and the second reading:

Mich. Montagn. des Essais Lib. 3. Cap. 5.

QVi n'a la jouissance qu'en la jouissance, qui ne gaigne que du haut point, qui n'ayme la chasse qu'en la prise, il ne luy appartient se mesler a l'escole d'Amour, le plaisir n'est plaisir sans amertume.

The text as thus copied has a number of variations, both from the author's 1588 edition⁷ and from Mlle de Gournay's 1595 edition⁸ of the essays. Orthographical variants can be dismissed with little comment. Cats reads *jouissance* in both instances for *iouissance* (1588); *n'ayme* for *n'aime* (1588); *prise* for *prinse* (1588); and *appertient* for *appartient* (1588). Two changes of addition and omission are the reading *la jouissance*, in the first instance, for *iouissance* (1588); and the omission of *pas de* (1588) after *appertient*. More important still is the fact that Cats changes the *à nostre escole* of the 1588 edition to *a l'escole d'Amour*, and then, to make his quotation the more pertinent, presumes to add the clause *le plaisir n'est plaisir sans amertume*. Mlle de Gournay, in her 1595 edition, has nothing similar to these major alterations; nor, as a matter of interest, have the autograph marginalia of the Bordeaux volumes,⁹ or any of the printed editions brought out between 1595 and 1618. It is clear that, on the evidence of this passage alone, no conclusion can be come to as to which edition of the essays Cats is using. His main variants are of his own invention and are designed to round off his quotation and fit it to its new context.

⁷ For the 1588 edition, I am everywhere following F. Strowski's reprint of the Bordeaux volumes (3 plus 1 volumes, Bordeaux, 1906-20), where it appears as the Roman type in the body of the text.

⁸ For the Gournay edition of 1595, I am following the copy in the British Museum.

⁹ For the marginalia I am, of course, following the italic type given by Strowski in the body of his text.

Emblem XXXIX, the second of those in Book I to quote Montaigne, is headed "Non intrandum, aut penetrandum," this being elaborated into a French quatrain as:

Rien que le sot, sans force, sans courage,
Demeure garotté en ce debil cordage,
Que Venus a filé: le brave esprit y vaut,
Ou iamais y entrer, ou penetrer y faut.

A pertinent quotation is again found from Ovid. The sentence taken from Montaigne is less apposite:

Mich. Montagn. des Essais. Lib. 3. Cap. 5.
Le vice est de n'en pas sortir, non pas d'y entrer.

This sentence does not appear in the 1588 edition. It was added by Mlle de Gournay in 1595, her complete passage reading:

Car, comme dit le compte d'Aristippus, parlant a des ieunes hommes, qui rougissoient de le veoir entrer chez vne courtisane: Le vice est, de n'en pas sortir, non pas d'y entrer.

This Strowski reproduces as one of the Bordeaux marginalia:

Car, come dict le conte d'Aristippus parlant a des ieunes gens qui rougissoient de le voir entrer ches une courtisane: Le vice est de n'en pas sortir, non pas d'y entrer.

On this occasion, Cats has respected the wording and the orthography of his source. Given the full quotation, its application is perhaps unfortunate.

The second book of the *Emblemata* contains 109 quotations in all. A number of classical and contemporary Latin authors is here drawn upon by Cats for the first time, among the former being Varro, Cornelius Gallus, Livy, Martial, Juvenal, and Claudian, and among the latter Guicciardini¹⁰ and Lipsius. The main feature of the second book is, however, the greater use made of the French vernacular. Montaigne no longer appears in isolation. Two quotations are introduced by the words *Le Proverbe Francois di(c)t*: (Emblems XLIV and XLIX), Emblem XXII has a short passage from Amyot's *Plutarch*, and Emblem XLIII a few lines from Pierre Matthieu. The sole use made of Montaigne is in Emblem XXXIII, the title of which is "Non id agis, quod agis." The French verse elaboration of this title reads:

Robijn [sic] faict grand devoir, tout pour la republique,
Ainsi le dit il, mais remarquez sa pratique,
Vous trouverez en fin qu'il soit un vray Trochil,
Lequel s'est engraissey servant au crocodil.

Two quotations are then added, the first in Latin from the first book

¹⁰ It is worthy of mention that, in Book II, quotations from Guicciardini are given in Italian in the body of the Latin discourses of Emblems XXXIII and XXXIV.

of the *De Constantia* of Lipsius (1615), and the second in French from Montaigne:

Mich. Montagn.

QV'elque personnage que l'homme joue, il ioue tousiours le sien parmy.

This sentence, although it is taken from Book I, Essay 20, nevertheless does not appear in the 1588 edition. It is added by Mlle de Gournay in 1595 as:

Mais quelque personnage que l'homme entrepreigne, il iouë tousiours le sien parmy.

It also appears in Strowski's edition of the Bordeaux volumes as one of the manuscript marginalia:

Mais quelque personnage que l'homme entrepraigne, il ioue tousiours le sien parmy

with, as a manuscript variant, the *Mais* omitted, leaving *Quelque* as the first word of the sentence. In both series of additions, it is a short sentence buried in a long interpolation. As for Emblem XXXVII of Book I, we are again faced with a quotation which is tampered with both orthographically and in content. In *personage*, *ioue*, *tousiours*, Cats follows exactly the spelling which may still be read today in Montaigne's own handwriting, although, of course, no such privilege was open to him. The initial *Mais* (1595, and the Bordeaux marginalia) is omitted by Cats, since he is offering the sentence in isolation and not as part of an argument; in this, without knowing it, he reproduces a manuscript variant of the Bordeaux marginalia which, again, he could not have seen. The verb *entrepraigne* (Bordeaux marginalia) or *entrepreigne* (1595) is replaced by *joue*, this presenting at once a repetition and an orthographical inconsistency. By taking the sentence out of its context, Cats permits himself to twist its meaning and its application away from what the author intended. Finally, it is worthy of note that, apart from the laconic "Mich. Montagn.," he gives no reference for his quotation.

Book III of the *Emblemata* differs from the two earlier ones in that, of its 103 quotations, as many as 13 come from Saint Augustine, 28 are presented as passages from the Vulgate, and a further 28 come from the Bible in French translation. In this company Montaigne finds no place.

The essayist retrieves himself in the *Maechden-plicht*. Only 44 emblems are given, and, of the 83 quotations, 16 are in French. The contributor on whom the greatest demands are made is Juan Luis Vives. From the first book of his *De institutione foeminae Christianae* of 1524, six Latin quotations are taken in all, there being a further seven from the French version of the same volume and yet one more in Latin from his *De officio mariti* of 1529. There is one French passage from Pierre Matthieu and one from Amyot's *Plutarch*, the

Maechden-plicht in this resembling exactly the second book of the *Emblemata*. Emblem XI of the *Maechden-plicht* is remarkable as containing the only quotation in the whole volume to be supplied by Ronsard. The name Montaigne appears six times.

Emblem I of the *Maechden-plicht* has the heading "Non, nisi nupta, viget," translated into French as "Sans mariage, n'a courage." This is illustrated by a quotation from Lucretius and by one from Montaigne:

Montagn. lib. 3. de Essais. cap. 5.

Tout le mouvement du monde se resout, & rend a cest accouplage; c'est une matiere infuse par tout, c'est un Centre, ou toutes choses regardent.

This sentence first appeared in the author's 1588 edition, and it is reproduced without alteration by Mlle de Gournay in 1595 and by Strowski. Cats's only variations are variations of spelling and of punctuation.¹¹ Emblem III is headed "Familia innupti manca," which is translated as:

Le fuseau ne peut bien aller
Ou que l'on n'oit barbe parler.

The quotations for this emblem are first a passage allegedly from Saint Cyprian, and then:

Montagn. Lib. des Essais 3. cap. 5.

Il trouve plus aisé de porter une cuirasse toute sa vie qu'un pucelage.

Once again, the 1588 rendering is reproduced without change by both Mlle de Gournay and Strowski, Cats differing only in points of spelling and punctuation.¹² The title of Emblem XI is "Virginitatis honos virginitate perit" or

Tel refuse,
Qui apres muse.

It is this emblem which draws upon Ronsard. The Montaigne quotation reads:

Montagn. lib. 3. cap. 5.

L'Amour ne me semble proprement & naturellement en sa saison, qu'en l'aage voisin a l'enfance, & la beauté non plus.

In the author's 1588 edition, this sentence in its entirety appears as follows:

Le diray-ie, pourveu qu'on ne m'en prenne a la gorge? l'amour ne me semble proprement & naturellement en sa saison qu'en l'aage voisin de l'enfance,

¹¹ He reads: *mouvement* for *moueuement* (1588); *resout* followed by a comma for *resoult* and no comma (1588); *a cest accouplage* followed by a semicolon for *à cet accouplage* followed by a colon (1588); and *Centre, ou* for *centre où* (1588).

¹² He reads: *trouve* for *treuve* (1588); suppresses the comma after *vie*; reads *pucelage* for *pucelage* (1588); and takes the quotation as a whole sentence, whereas for Montaigne it is but part of one.

Quem si puellarum insereres choro,
Mille sagaces falleret hospites
Discrimen obscurum, solutis
Crinibus ambiguoque vultu.¹³

To this, as a second sentence, in both Mlle de Gournay's 1595 edition and as one of the Bordeaux autograph marginalia, is added:

Et la beauté non plus.

Cats's method of approach is clear. He takes the 1595 text. The opening part of the first sentence and the quotation from Horace are both omitted. The second sentence is joined to the first. Orthography is respected, but Cats prefers *voisin a* to *voisin de*.

Emblem XXXIV contains a novelty. The titles are "Si premis erumpit" and

Quant on le serre
Il va par terre

One of the two quotations reads:

M. Montagn.

La nature, en ses operations, ne souffre rien de contrainct; car si vous arrestez le cours d'une riviere, elle se desbordera & gastera tout; le feu enfermé, comme on voit ès mines, fera crever & peter la terre, tenez une femme serrée, tant que voudrez, si sera-elle [*sic*] un saut en rue, malgré voz dents, s'il luy en prend envie.

This quotation, for all its resemblance to certain passages in Book III, Essay 5, is not from the pen of the essayist. We have already seen, in Emblem XXXIII of Book II of the *Minne-Beelden*, that Cats, once taken outside Book III, Essay 5, of Montaigne, is unable to give a reference for his passage. Emblem XXXIV of the *Maecheden-plicht* marks a further development. Having copied in his notebook a passage which fits his subject matter admirably, he has failed to jot down its provenance. It is sufficiently good to be the work of the essayist, and its thought content is worthy of him. Cats is happy enough to label it "M. Montagn."

The two remaining quotations from Montaigne in the *Maecheden-plicht* have little to add to what has gone before. Emblem XXXVII is entitled "Id curat, quod pondus habet" or

Bon estudiant
Maigre amant.

It has the quotation:

Montagn. lib. 3 des Essais cap. 5.
C'est trahison se marier, sans s'espouser.

These words do not appear in 1588 but are added by Mlle de Gournay in 1595, as the tail-end of a sentence and with the comma after

¹³ Horace, Odes, II, 5, lines 21-24, usually printed today with *mire* for *mille*.

trahison instead of *marier*. The Bordeaux marginalia have Cats's punctuation and the slight addition of *de* after *trahison*. Finally, Emblem XXXIX, "Stultos dolor urget amores," or

Qui se marie par amours,
A bonnes nuits & mauvais jours,

includes the quotation:

Montagn. lib. 3. de Essais cap. 5.

Je ne voys point de mariages qui faillent plustost, & se troublent, que ceux qui s'achement par beauté, & desirs amoureux: il y faut des fondemens plus solides, ceste bouillante allegresse n'y vaut rien.

Once again slight liberties are taken with the 1588 text. For *vois* (1588) Cats prints *voys*; after *plustost* (1588) he adds a comma and after *troublent* a second comma; and for *la beauté* (1588) he copies *beauté* followed by a third comma. In Montaigne's 1588 text, *amoureux* ends a sentence, his second sentence reading:

Il y faut des fondemens plus solides & plus constans, & y marcher d'aguet; cette bouillante alegresse n'y vaut rien.

In short, *fondemens* (1588) is spelled by Cats as *fondaments*; & *plus constans*, & *y marcher d'aguet*; is replaced by a comma; *cette* gives place to *ceste*; and *alegresse* to *allegresse*.

The conclusions to be drawn from this textual examination are illuminating. In the first place the fame of Montaigne's essays was sufficiently great for a Dutch compiler of emblems, writing it is true for European consumption, to include in a single volume eight passages from him and one other allegedly from him: and this in 1618, only thirty years after the first publication of the three books of essays in their entirety. Montaigne is placed in good company, in fact in the best company that the world has to offer; and yet more demands are made upon him than on any other vernacular writer. Admittedly, all this is off-set to a degree by the fact that essays lend themselves in a particular way to such pilfering as that of Cats: to some measure it is both the genre and the subject matter as well as the intrinsic merit which account for the frequency of quotation. Secondly, it seems apparent that it is one essay alone which attracts Cats, i.e., Book III, Essay 5, "Sur des vers de Virgile." From that one essay come seven of the nine attempts at quotation, the only other genuine one coming from Book I, Essay 20, "Que philosophe c'est apprendre à mourir," but this, it should be noticed, without adequate reference. Again, the subject matter of "Sur des vers de Virgile" lends itself particularly to the general theme of all four of Jakob Cats's compilations: but there are many other passages in the essays which he might well have used. The fairest conclusion seems to be that he read Book III, Essay 5, carefully: the sentence from Book I, Essay 20, he picked up in some other way, perhaps by opening a

volume at random, perhaps by hearing it quoted, perhaps even by seeing it quoted elsewhere; but the remainder of the essays were comparatively unknown to him. Finally, can any decision be made as to the edition of Montaigne which Cats was using? From the quotations given, all the editions prior to that of 1595 are immediately proved impossible. It is Mlle de Gournay's text which Cats is following, either in her 1595 edition or in some reprint brought out between that date and 1618.¹⁴ So capricious were the habits of contemporary printers and so personal their orthography and punctuation that it is difficult to be more precise. The fact that, for the quotation for Emblem XXXVII of Cats's Book I, the editions of 1608, 1611, and 1616 all print *du point* in error for *du haut point*, whereas Cats has the correct wording, would seem to eliminate those three. Similarly, for the quotation for Emblem I of *Maechden-plicht*, Cats's *a cest accouplage* would seem to agree with the 1595 *à cet accouplage* against the *en cet accouplage* of 1598 and, with variant spellings, of all later editions being considered. The probability then is that Cats was using the 1595 text. Farther than that one cannot go.

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¹⁴ No complete list of the editions published between 1595 and 1618 has ever been printed to my knowledge. The following editions, with all of which I have collated Cats's quotations, form a nucleus of such a list. It is probably not complete.

- (1) 1595: Paris, 1 vol., fol., xxiv + 523 + 231 pp., by Abel Angelier, sometimes, however, with the name of his associate Michel Sonnius. 1st edition of the Gournay text.
 - (2) 1598: Paris, 1 vol., 8vo, viii + 1165 pp., by Abel Angelier. 2nd edition of the Gournay text.
 - (3) 1600: Paris, 1 vol., 8vo, viii + 1165 pp., by Abel Angelier. 3rd edition of the Gournay text.
 - (4) 1602: Paris, 1 vol., 8vo, viii + 1165 pp., by Abel Angelier. 4th edition of the Gournay text.
 - (5) 1602: Leyden, 1 vol., 8vo, viii + 1031 pp., by Jehan Doreau.
 - (6) 1608: Paris, 1 vol., 8vo, xvi + 1129 pp. + index, by Jean Petitpas.
 - (7) 1611: Paris, 1 vol., 8vo, xvi + 1129 pp. + index, by Claude Rigaud.
 - (8) 1616: Cologne, 1 vol., 8vo, xvi + 1129 pp. + index, by Philippe Albert.
 - (9) 1617: Paris, 1 vol., 4to, xxiv + 987 + 102 + lxvi pp., by Jean Petitpas.
- There is also a Rouen edition by J. Berthelin, 1 vol., 8vo, xiv + 1129 pp. + index, which is variously dated 1600 and 1641.

PALISSOT AND VOLTAIRE

By C. F. ZEEK

In the year 1755 there was performed in Nancy in the presence of King Stanislas, a comedy by a little-known author of twenty-six years named Charles Palissot de Montenoy. The play, entitled *Le Cercle*, attracted attention because in it the author declared war on the Encyclopedists. His special target here was J.-J. Rousseau, who is represented as being a "cosmopolite" attacked by "la maladie épidémique, la philosophie," but who regretted being a "philosophe" and did everything "autrement que le vulgaire et se moquait du public."

To this Rousseau made only a mild reply, but Diderot and others took up the gauntlet with great violence. As Palissot bitterly observes in his *Mémoires*: "Rousseau avait alors pour enthousiastes ces mêmes philosophes devenus depuis ses plus irréconciliables ennemis et qui ont attendu pour le déchirer, qu'il fût malheureux et persécuté." Indeed, Palissot felt that they did not stop short of persecution in his own case.

So in his turn Palissot retaliated with a bitter denunciation of Diderot in a brochure entitled *Petites Lettres sur de Grands Philosophes* (1756). Concerning these letters Palissot claimed: "Elles eurent de la célébrité parce qu'elles justifiaient pleinement l'opinion que toutes les honnêtes gens commençaient à se former de la secte dangereuse qui s'élevait alors parmi nous."

This outburst was followed in 1760 by Palissot's comedy *Les Philosophes*. While obviously an imitation of *Les Femmes Savantes*, the play is well written and some of the characters—notably Cydalise, "la femme philosophe"—are well drawn. It had fourteen consecutive performances at the Comédie Française and won, according to Lintilhac, "les applaudissements inouïs du parterre."¹

The most celebrated scene of the play is the one in which Crispin (obviously Rousseau) goes about on all fours eating lettuce, thus dramatizing the famous *boutade* of Voltaire concerning Rousseau's *Discours sur l'Origine de l'Inégalité*:

J'ai reçu, monsieur, votre nouveau livre contre le genre humain. . . . On n'a jamais employé tant d'esprit à nous rendre bêtes; il prend envie de marcher à quatre pattes quand on lit votre ouvrage.²

Other unmistakable victims of Palissot's shafts are Diderot, represented by Dortidius, and Duclos, by Théophraste. It is more than probable, also, that Grimm and Helvétius are aimed at in some of the other characters.

¹ E. F. Lintilhac, *Histoire du générale théâtre en France* (Paris, 1909), IV, 400.

² Voltaire, letter to Rousseau, August 30, 1755.

The "philosophes" en bloc are assailed in these lines:

Ils ont l'art de détruire;
Mais ils n'élèvent rien et ce n'est pas instruire.
Quels fruits attendez-vous de leurs vains argumens?³

As we have seen, Palissot's previous writings had already provoked considerable opposition. But this play stirred up a veritable hornet's nest. In his preface Palissot had said he was not attacking "les vrais philosophes," but that his comedy had unmasked "les faux philosophes," just as Molière's *Tartuffe* had unmasked "les faux dévots." The fury of the Encyclopedists can well be imagined when one recalls that just the year before (February 7, 1759) the royal privilege to publish the Encyclopedia had been revoked.

It is not surprising, then, that those who felt they were attacked should fight back. But the extraordinary thing is that Voltaire, the recognized leader of the "mouvement philosophique," was never attacked, and Voltaire, for his part, did not join in the onslaught against Palissot.

It is the purpose of this paper to try to discover why, in this bitter controversy, Palissot spared Voltaire, and why Voltaire in turn spared Palissot.

Inasmuch as some of the "philosophes" had claimed that Voltaire had given Palissot a drubbing, Palissot published in Geneva his correspondence with Voltaire with regard to his play. An examination of this correspondence may throw some light on this problem.

On May 28, 1760, Palissot wrote to Voltaire that he made a distinction between the real philosophers like Voltaire and

les auteurs téméraires qui ont osé mettre au jour une philosophie destructive des mœurs et des lois. Parmi ceux-ci se trouve celui qui à la tête d'une traduction du *Père de Famille* de Goldini a osé imprimer deux libelles scandaleux contre deux dames infiniment respectables.⁴

Palissot continues:

Méfiez-vous de ces "Philosophes" (corsaires) qui vous ont nommé leur chef. . . . Quand j'ai parlé dans ma pièce du mot *humanité*, devenu si familier dans nos productions philosophiques, je n'ai voulu frapper que sur l'abus que l'on en fait, en employant ce mot dans des ouvrages dont les maximes, loin d'être humaines, sont infiniment pernicieuses à la société.

To this Voltaire replies from Les Délices, June 4, 1760:

Je commence par vous dire que je tiens votre pièce pour bien écrite; je conçois même que Crispin Philosophe marchant à quatre pattes, a dû faire beaucoup rire, et je crois que mon ami Jean-Jacques en rira tout le premier; cela est gai, cela n'est point méchant, et d'ailleurs le Citoyen de Genève étant coupable de lèse-Comédie [the *Lettre sur les Spectacles* had appeared in 1758], il est tout naturel que la Comédie le lui rende. Mais il n'est pas de même des Citoyens de

³ Palissot, *Œuvres* (Liège, 1777), II, 210.

⁴ The "deux dames" referred to were La Comtesse de la Marck and La Princesse de Robecq.

Paris que vous avez mis sur le Théâtre; il n'y a pas là certainement de quoi rire.

Then Voltaire insists on being included among those "pauvres philosophes qui conspirent contre l'Etat." He points out that he was the first in France to write against "les Grands tourbillons de Descartes" in favor of Newton's teachings on gravitation. (He had indeed written in 1738 a book on *Les Elements de la Philosophie de Newton*.) Second, he had contributed at least a dozen articles to the Encyclopedia. Finally, he was one of the first to use the word *humanité*, against which Palissot rails in his comedy.

He feels that Palissot was unjust in representing "D'Alembert, Duclos, Diderot, Helvétius, le Chevalier de Jaucourt et *tutti quanti*, comme des marauds qui enseignent à voler dans la poche. S'ils étaient tels que vous les représentez, il faudrait les envoyer aux galères, ce qui n'entre point du tout dans le genre comique." He then defends Helvétius on the grounds that he has since repented of the "demi-douzaine de propositions téméraires" advanced in his book *De L'Esprit*, which had been condemned by the government in 1758. As for Duclos, Voltaire contends that his book, *Considérations sur les Mœurs* (1751), is the work of "un honnête homme." Voltaire admits that he does not know Diderot, but that he has great respect for his profound knowledge. Further, he considers the Encyclopedia "le plus beau monument qu'on pût élever à l'honneur des sciences." He cannot imagine that Diderot would insult the two "grandes dames" referred to by Palissot, and he demands proof. He concludes in the most conciliatory tone, as follows:

Je vous ai parlé, monsieur, avec franchise. Si vous trouvez dans le fond du cœur que j'ai raison, voyez ce que vous avez à faire. Si j'ai tort, dites-le-moi . . . redressez-moi. Je vous jure que je n'ai aucune liaison avec aucun Encyclopédiste, excepté peut-être avec M. D'Alembert. . . . J'ai l'honneur, d'être, monsieur, avec une estime très véritable de vos talents, etc. . . . [Signed]: Voltaire, Gentil-homme Ordinaire du Roi.

On the 17th of June Palissot replies, defending himself vigorously and often skillfully, but disclaiming having attacked certain persons:

Vous êtes, monsieur, le premier qui ayez fait connaître en France les sublimes découvertes de Newton; mais ce ne sont pas des Philosophes tels que Newton . . . que j'ai désignés dans ma comédie. . . . Je n'ai voulu parler, monsieur, que de ces charlatans de Philosophie, qui ont osé ébranler les fondements de la morale, en la réduisant en système: qui ont nié jusqu'au sentiment de cette loi naturelle, dont vous êtes le vengeur dans un de vos ouvrages, et qui ont renouvelé dans des écrits dangereux les principes des Hobbes, des Mandeville, etc. . . . Quoique je n'aye pas mis de correctif au titre de ma pièce, je n'ai pas même donné lieu à l'équivoque. Je n'ai attaqué que la fausse Philosophie . . . Molière n'intitula point sa comédie: *Les Fausses Savantes*. Son ouvrage prouvait assez qu'il n'avait pas eu l'intention de jeter du ridicule sur les sciences.

Palissot insists that he was not attacking the articles of Voltaire in the Encyclopedia, "articles qui ne contiennent ordinairement que des

définitions courtes et précises, suivies de quelques exemples." He insists that there is an infinite difference between speaking of *humanité* in dry terms, which presupposes a heart only moderately affected, and branding it on the soul "avec ces traits de feu qui prouvent combien on est pénétré soi-même. . . ."

Voyez Mérope [says he], qui croit retrouver quelques traits de son fils dans un étranger qu'on lui amène. Qui imaginerait s'exprimer comme elle? C'est la nature dans sa plus grande naïveté; mais qu'elle est sublime! . . . Est-ce donc à l'auteur de Mérope, de Zaïre et d'Alzire à se confondre avec nos prétendus Philosophes?

Palissot denies having aimed at the Chevalier de Jaucourt and D'Alembert, although the latter "lui avait donné très gratuitement des marques de haine dans l'affaire de Nancy."

Au lieu de représenter ces messieurs *tutti quanti* comme voleurs [he continues], j'ai mis sur la scène un valet qui, abusant des spéculations philosophiques de son maître, finit par le voler. Ce trait au théâtre a toujours excité le rire, jamais l'indignation. Il est évident, monsieur, que de certains principes pourraient conduire jusques-là. Le système qui fait de l'amitié même un commerce d'intérêt personnel, qui détruit dans l'homme le sentiment de sa liberté, dans lequel on convient qu'il est des gens qu'un penchant malheureux, mais irrésistible, nécessite à se faire rouer: un tel système, dis-je, est infiniment dangereux. Il serait absurde d'en conclure que l'auteur du système fut un voleur de grandchemin . . . mais il est très permis, très louable de jeter un peu de ridicule sur de pareils principes.

As an example of this he cites Pascal who fiercely attacked the Jesuits, but did not represent them as "une société de filoux qu'il fallait envoyer aux galères."

He disclaims having modeled his characters after any "philosophe" in particular. He had in mind only the principles of a few "philosophes." He considers M. Helvétius "un très honnête homme" and M. Duclos "un homme de probité."

Molière [he continues] s'y donna plus de liberté que moi. Il joua deux académiciens—Cotin et Ménage—de manière à n'être méconnu de personne; tous deux n'avaient fait que des ouvrages d'honnêtes gens. Ménage avait été honoré plusieurs fois des lettres de la Reine Christine. Cotin était prêtre, autre raison de ménagement pour Molière, qui cependant se permit à l'égard de ces deux hommes, ce que je ne me permettrai pas. Il frappa jusque sur les mœurs. Trissotin est congédié pour un sentiment d'intérêt personnel très bas. Vadius dans le cours de la pièce écrit une lettre anonyme, ce qui n'est pas le procédé d'une âme fort délicate. *Ces deux messieurs n'avaient point composé de livres de morale dont on pût dire que de pareilles actions fussent la conséquence.*

De tous les temps, la Comédie, qui ne serait bonne à rien si elle ne ressemblait à personne, a joui de ces petites libertés.

J'ai nommé une fois l'Encyclopédie dans mon ouvrage: il n'y a pas là de trait de satire. Trissotin cite Descartes dans la comédie de Molière; ce n'était pas une injure contre Descartes. . . . Le projet de l'Encyclopédie est sans doute admirable; mais il me semble qu'il est bien loin d'être rempli; que la méthode

adoptée par les rédacteurs est directement contraire au but que l'on s'était proposé.⁵

As for Diderot, Palissot contends that he is not clear, unlike Voltaire who is "clair même sur des matières très abstraites."

cependant [he continues], je ne l'en tiendrais moins pour Philosophe, si je pouvais justifier ses libelles. . . . Consultez les dames que je vous nomme. . . . Le public doute si peu de la chose qu'il m'a abandonné M. Diderot dès la première représentation des *Philosophes*. Je n'ai entendu de voix qui se fût élevée pour lui.

He concludes:

A travers les instructions que vous voulez bien me donner, il y règne un ton de modération et de bonté qui me prouve que vous n'avez pas oublié le sentiment qui me conduisit à Genève, il y a quelques années. Je vous en remercie, monsieur, et il serait à souhaiter pour nos *Philosophes* qu'ils s'étudiassent encore longtemps à vous contrefaire. . . . Malheureusement pour le parti, jusqu'à présent on n'a publié contre moi que des injures; rien ne paraît moins philosophique!

To this Voltaire cleverly replies:

vous me faites enrager, monsieur; j'avais résolu de rire de tout dans mes douces retraites, et vous me contristez. Vous m'accablez de politesses . . . mais vous me faites rougir quand vous imprimez que je suis supérieur à ceux que vous attaquez. Je crois bien que je fais mieux des vers qu'eux, et même que j'en sais autant qu'eux en fait d'histoire; mais, sur mon âme je suis à peine leur écolier dans tout le reste.⁶

Voltaire then asserts that he has evidence that Diderot did not write the insulting letters about the two "grandes dames." (As a matter of fact it appears that Grimm was the guilty one.⁷) He fears it is jealousy that is taking up arms against the Encyclopedia, "l'ouvrage immortel entrepris par Diderot et D'Alembert."

He charges that it was doubtless due to a certain Abraham Chaumeix⁸ that Palissot misquoted D'Alembert's preface and also a passage attributed to Diderot: "C'est dans ces circonstances odieuses que vous faites votre comédie contre les Philosophes: vous venez les percer quand ils sont *sub gladio*."

Other accusations made against the "philosophes" Voltaire claims were taken from "un fou nommé La Métrie,"⁹ who had no connection with the Encyclopedia. Voltaire is afraid that Palissot's denunciation will fall into the hands of a Prince—of the Queen herself. (He admits that Molière satirized Cotin and Ménage, but Molière did not say that they taught a wicked philosophy.) "Vous faites donc,

⁵ Palissot is in error here because Diderot had set forth as one of the main objects of the Encyclopedia "de changer la façon commune de penser."

⁶ No date indicated but probably the end of June, 1760.

⁷ See Brunel, *Voltaire, Extraits en Prose* (Paris, n.d.), p. 376 n.

⁸ A Jansenist who attacked the "philosophes" in *Préjugés légitimes contre l'Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1758).

⁹ A queer undisciplined doctor, a reader for the King of Prussia while Voltaire was in Berlin.

beaucoup plus de mal que vous ne pensiez et que vous ne vouliez." Hereupon he makes a very clever proposition.

Voulez-vous à présent que je vous dise librement ma pensée? Voilà votre pièce jouée, elle est bien écrite, elle a réussi; il y aurait une autre sorte de gloire à acquérir, ce serait d'insérer dans tous les journaux une déclaration bien mesurée, dans laquelle vous avoueriez n'ayant pas en votre possession le *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique*, vous avez été trompé par les extraits infidèles qu'on vous en a donnés; que vous vous faites un plaisir de rendre au travail immense de ses auteurs toute la justice qu'ils méritent. . . . Voilà mon avis: bon ou mauvais. Cette affaire m'attriste et je veux finir gaiement ma vie; je veux rire: je suis vieux et malade et je tiens la gaité un remède plus sûr que les ordonnances de mon cher et estimable Tronchin. . . . Un Français qui n'est pas gai est un homme hors de son élément. Vous faites des comédies; soyez donc joyeux et ne faites point de l'amusement du Théâtre un procès criminel.

On the 7th of July Palissot sends his rejoinder. If Diderot seems innocent to Voltaire, the public does not think so. Further, "Je l'ai lu, je ne l'entends point. . . . Il m'ennuie." Palissot insists that he is not jealous; how could one who is a poet be jealous of those who merely compile facts! As for the charge that he is attacking them *sub gladio*, he says:

Ils sont loin d'être persécutés. Ils s'appellent eux-mêmes les Législateurs du Monde, les Réformateurs de leur Siècle, etc. . . . (Si Molière n'a pas reproché à Cotin ni à Ménage d'enseigner une morale perverse, c'est qu'ils n'avaient jamais traité de morale). . . .

Then he asks why Voltaire is reproaching him for two errors which he has corrected. He admits that the passages attributed to Diderot and D'Alembert were wrong, but asserts that the latter passage was indeed taken from the Encyclopedia, from an article by the Chevalier de Jaucourt.

Comme j'avais intitulé ma pièce *Les Philosophes*, et non pas *Les Encyclopédistes*, j'ai cru que je pouvais puiser des citations hors de l'*Encyclopédie* et que toutes les absurdités prétendues philosophiques appartenaient à mon plan. Or le *Discours sur la Vie Heureuse* de La Métrie, est un ouvrage très fertile en absurdités de cette espèce. On y traite la grande question du bonheur, on y parle du bien et du mal moral, du juste et de l'injuste, etc. . . . Ce n'est donc pas sérieusement que vous dites que ce livre n'a pas de rapport à la philosophie. . . . On a fait agir auprès de vous trop de ressorts contre moi. . . .

Palissot concludes that Voltaire must be joking when he asks him to retract, as he too must have read the Encyclopedia first hand.

To this Voltaire replies on the 12th of July, concluding the argument in the following conciliatory terms:

Votre lettre est extrêmement plaisante et pleine d'esprit, monsieur; si vous aviez été aussi gai dans votre comédie des *Philosophes*, ils auraient dû aller eux-mêmes vous battre des mains, mais vous avez été sérieux et voilà le mal. J'aime à rire, mais nous n'en sommes pas moins persécutés. . . . On nous a traités de perturbateurs du repos public et . . . de mauvais Chrétiens. On a dit à la Reine et à Monseigneur le Dauphin que tous ceux qui ont travaillé à l'*Encyclopédie*, du nombre desquels j'ai l'honneur d'être, ont fait un pacte avec

le Diable. Je suis assez bon Chrétien pour leur pardonner au fond de mon âme mais non pas au bout de ma plume.

Permettez que je vous dise . . . que votre Préface, donnée séparément avec votre pièce, est une accusation formée contre mes amis et peut-être contre moi. . . . Je suis très fâché qu'on accuse mes amis et moi de n'être pas bons Chrétiens. Je tremble toujours qu'on ne brûle quelque philosophe sur un malentendu. . . . Je consens qu'on dise de moi que je suis un radoteur, un mauvais poète. . . . Mais je ne veux pas qu'on soupçonne ma foi. Mes curés rendent bon témoignage de moi. . . . Frère Menoux, qui aime passionnément le bon vin, et qui a beaucoup d'argent en poche, est obligé de me rendre justice. J'ai fait ma confession de foi au frère Latour. J'étais même assez bien auprès du défunt Pape qui avait beaucoup de bontés pour moi parce qu'il était goguenard.¹⁰ Ainsi ayant pour moi tant de témoignages, et surtout celui de ma bonne conscience, je veux bien avoir quelque chose à craindre dans ce monde-ci, mais rien dans l'autre.

Although Palissot had remained impenitent, Voltaire says with a twinkle in his eye, citing his own poem *Le Russe à Paris*: "On dit que vous vous repentez d'avoir assommé ces pauvres Philosophes qui ne vous disaient mot. Il est beau et bon de ne point mourir dans l'impénitence finale. . . . Que reste-t-il à faire quand on s'est bien harpillé? A mener une vie douce, tranquille, et à rire." This time he signed: "Voltaire, le Bon Suisse."

During this whole controversy, as far as one can discover from the letters we have read and also from Voltaire's correspondence with D'Alembert, his friend Thieriot, and Mme d'Epinay, Voltaire seems to be determined to remain in the good graces of the Encyclopedists and at the same time not to antagonize Palissot. D'Alembert urged Voltaire to come to the defense of the "philosophes" and turn his guns on Palissot; but the patriarch of Ferney was careful to refrain. A feeble remonstrance was as far as he would go. "Vous méritiez," he complains, "d'être l'ami des Philosophes, au lieu d'écrire contre les Philosophes. J'ai toujours rendu justice à vos talents et j'ai toujours souhaité que vous ne prissiez les armes que contre nos ennemis."¹¹

Just what was Voltaire's interest in Palissot that he, whose rapier was so sharp for others, should handle him with such gentleness? Was it simply the indulgence of an old man towards a young man of promise? Possibly. Voltaire was sixty-six, Palissot thirty. The latter had been presented to him by Choiseul, who was soon to become prime minister of France. In a letter to Choiseul, dated October, 1755, Voltaire thanked him heartily for having presented Palissot. And in December of the same year he wrote Palissot from *Les Délices* in highly complimentary terms: "On ne peut vous connaître, monsieur, sans s'intéresser vivement à vous. . . . M. de Gauffecourt est ici depuis quelques. Il fait pour le sel à peu près ce que vous faites

¹⁰ It will be remembered that Voltaire had cleverly dedicated his *Mahomet* to the Pope and that the latter had in his turn conferred on him his apostolic benediction.

¹¹ See article by Feletz on Palissot, *Biographie Universelle*, Tome 32.

pour le tabac;¹² mais il ne fait pas de beaux vers comme vous." In a letter to his friend Thieriot, Voltaire calls Palissot, along with a M. Patu, "un autre enfant d'Apollon." He adds: "Ces deux Pélerins d'Emmaüs sont remplis du feu poétique."¹³

Or was Voltaire gentle because Palissot had spared him? If so, that was no argument for Diderot, who, though not directly attacked in *Le Cercle*, came to the defense of Rousseau.

Probably a more important reason was that after the *Lettre sur les Spectacles* in 1758 Voltaire began to detest Rousseau for his "lèse-comédie," and he enjoyed Palissot's satire of him, especially since Crispin personified Voltaire's idea.

But probably the controlling reason for Voltaire's moderation was that he knew Palissot was Choiseul's protégé (he was the son of Choiseul's *avocat*), and behind Choiseul was Mme de Pompadour, the real ruler of France. While Voltaire was already settled at Ferney, he still signed himself "Gentilhomme Ordinaire du Roi," and he doubtless was not eager to attack a man who was counting on the support of the Choiseul government. The publication of the *Encyclopedie* had been held up in 1759, and Voltaire probably felt that a conciliatory policy was in the best interests of his "couvent."

On the other hand, why did Palissot spare Voltaire? Was it fear? Delafarge seems to think so, saying: "Sa tactique consistait donc à isoler le grand homme, de façon à obtenir sa neutralité, sinon sa bienveillance."¹⁴ Possibly so, but fear did not deter Palissot from assailing Diderot and all the rest. Was it that Palissot, a conservative by birth and a bachelor of theology, was violently opposed to the atheism of Diderot and some others, but found Voltaire's deism acceptable? That too is possible.

But most probably the compelling reason for Palissot's constantly conciliatory attitude towards Voltaire was his great and unceasing admiration for Voltaire, especially as a fellow dramatist. For while it is clear that Palissot was entirely lacking in originality, he was, as Delafarge observes, "un homme très cultivé, qui connaissait bien notre littérature moderne, en particulier notre théâtre."¹⁵ Note the high terms in which Palissot refers to the author of *Zaïre*, *Alzire*, and *Mérope*, in his letter of June 17, 1760. If he overlooked or disregarded such works as the *Lettres Philosophiques*, he idolized Voltaire as a dramatist and poet. This idolatry was to continue all his life, and to be expanded to include Voltaire as a historian and humanitarian. Although Palissot adjusted himself like a chameleon to changing governments, he never swerved from his devotion to Vol-

¹² Thanks to Choiseul, Palissot had the post of Receveur du Tabac at Avignon.

¹³ Letter to Thieriot, November 8, 1755.

¹⁴ Delafarge, *Vie et Œuvres de Palissot* (Paris, 1912), p. 170.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 546.

taire. This is seen not only in his letters but in his *Mémoires sur la Littérature*, his edition of *La Henriade* (1784), his edition of the *Œuvres de Voltaire* (1792-1798), and a book on the *Génie de Voltaire* (1806).

This great admiration is probably best summed up in the *Avertissement* of his ode, *La Mort de Voltaire*:

La mort de M. de Voltaire est un malheur de tous les temps et de toutes les nations. . . . Ce grand poète, également distingué dans la littérature, l'histoire et la philosophie, ce législateur du goût, ce modèle des hommes aimables dans la société, cet homme d'Etat dans le Cabinet des ministres, était véritablement embrasé de . . . cet ardent amour de l'humanité, de cette bienveillance active pour tous ses semblables qui caractérisent tous ses écrits.

In conclusion, it may be observed that even this adulation by no means made of Palissot an authority on Voltaire. Indeed, Palissot would by now doubtless be consigned to oblivion were it not for the distinction of his adversaries and of his eminent correspondent.

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RACHEL'S RACINE: CLASSICAL OR ROMANTIC?

By ALVIN A. EUSTIS, JR.

When Talma died in 1826, French classical tragedy, which had been living on borrowed time since the end of the Empire, suffered a sudden decline. The Comédie Française, citadel of the genre, was itself at a low ebb. Women's acting had degenerated while Talma was still alive; neglecting the reforms he had adopted for his own parts, Mlle Raucourt, George, and Duchesnois had reveled in bombast and exaggerated gestures.¹ The *sociétaires* seemed no longer capable of producing a single actor or actress to compete with Frédérick Lemaître or Marie Dorval, and the public, after *Hernani*, followed the triumphant Romantic drama to other houses. By 1833, the deficit of France's first theater amounted to 5,000,000 francs.²

The tragedies of Racine, the most classical of the classics according to the new school, were of course the worst sufferers; from some thirty performances a year in Talma's heyday, they fell to nine in 1833, seven in 1834, five in 1836.³ It is small wonder that Théophile Gautier, seeing in all this the sure demise of Racine's theater, boasted in January, 1838:

L'on ne recevrait aujourd'hui à aucun théâtre une pièce de Racine, et . . . si elle était reçue, par hasard, elle serait sifflée assurément.⁴

However, that very summer, a girl of seventeen made her debut on the stage of the Comédie Française. With incredible assurance, she breathed new life into the heroines of the classical repertory. Within a few months, the public had flocked back. Receipts climbed from 500 to 5,000 francs a night, and a police cordon had to be thrown around the box office in order to contain the crowds.⁵ The performances of Racine's tragedies rose to thirty-four in 1838, and reached sixty-seven by 1839.⁶ Thus, after appearing as dead as the Romantics had claimed, the great dramatist's works showed that, properly interpreted, they could still be a living force in the theater.

The "delirious enthusiasm"⁷ with which Rachel was acclaimed by her contemporaries may be partly explained by the literary atmosphere of the period. Certain influential critics had never been won over to Romanticism: Granier de Cassagnac, Nisard, Gustave Planche, Saint-Marc Girardin, were relentless in their attacks against the new movement. Also, the public soon tired of the *drame*, with its

¹ J. Janin, *Rachel et la tragédie* (Paris, 1859), pp. 46-47.

² J. Marsan, *Autour du romantisme* (Toulouse, 1937), pp. 140-41.

³ A. Joannidès, *La Comédie Française de 1680 à 1920* (Paris, 1921).

⁴ *Histoire de l'art dramatique en France* (Paris, 1858-59), I, 86.

⁵ Marsan, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-45.

⁶ Joannidès, *op. cit.*

⁷ L. Lucas-Dubreton, *Rachel* (Paris, 1936), p. 29.

more and more frequent recourse to the excesses of melodrama. In 1838, *Ruy Blas*, after a brilliant opening, quickly fell from the boards. In 1839 and 1840, *Marion Delorme*, *Hernani*, *La Maréchale d'Ancre*, *Henri III et sa cour*, which had drawn large audiences a few years before, were complete failures.⁸ The well-known events of 1843, when Rachel reached the height of her career in a superb interpretation of the role of Phèdre, when the public turned its back on Hugo's *Burgraves* and applauded (with perhaps less discrimination) Ponsard's *Lucrèce*, did not, therefore, come unheralded. The same year, Sainte-Beuve spoke of a "reaction" against the Romantics and a "return to the past."⁹

Even though circumstances thus aided Rachel, her success in restoring Racine to favor depended, in the final analysis, on her interpretation of his heroines. In attempting to conjure up this interpretation after a century has elapsed, modern critics are remarkably at variance on its nature. André Thérive evokes the "Racine embrasé, le Racine romantique" created by Rachel.¹⁰ And F. Bentmann claims that she interested her audience only insofar as she "romanticized" and "modernized" Racine's tragedies.¹¹ On the other hand, James Agate maintains that in her acting she was "not a revolutionary, but a reactionary,"¹² while C. Latreille states:

Elle ne créa pas, à proprement parler, une interprétation nouvelle des chefs-d'œuvre classiques; la tradition, plus que l'inspiration, réglait son jeu.¹³

The same contradictions are present in the judgments which were passed on the actress by her contemporaries. Certain critics tend to favor the romantic interpretation by emphasizing the enormous difference between Rachel and the tragédiennes who had preceded her, or by insisting on her spontaneity and intuitive powers. Cuvillier-Fleury sums up her originality in these words:

Tandis que la vieille déclamation hurle et grimace . . . elle ose parler simplement, seule elle a le courage d'être naturelle.¹⁴

Alfred de Musset attributes her ability to avoid conventional gestures and turgid declamation to a "divining faculty," a "revelation" which can only be called "genius": "Ni leçons, ni conseils, ni études ne peuvent rien produire de semblable."¹⁵ Throughout the large volume in which he analyzes Rachel's art in great detail, Jules Janin stresses

⁸ C. Latreille, *La Fin du théâtre romantique et François Ponsard* (Paris, 1899), p. 84.

⁹ "Quelques vérités sur la situation en littérature," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, nouv. sér., XIII, 3 (1843), 5-20.

¹⁰ "Les Etapes d'une gloire," *Muse Française*, XVIII (1939), 313.

¹¹ *Geschichte der Racine-Kritik in der französischen Romantik* (Würzburg, 1930), p. 109.

¹² *Rachel* (New York, 1928), p. 18.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

¹⁴ Article of 1838, in Janin, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁵ "De la tragédie à propos des débuts de Mlle Rachel," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, XVI, 4 (1838), 350.

her "scorn for tradition," her "happy ignorance" of convention, her "imagination," "inspiration," "intelligence," and "will-power," combining to create such sensitive interpretations of Racine's heroines that the finest shades of feeling are perfectly rendered.¹⁶

Thus divorced from tradition and bereft of all formal schooling in the interpretation of tragedy, dependent on her inspiration alone, Rachel seems already far from classical. Théophile Gautier goes still further and calls her outright a romantic actress:

Cette âpreté et ce mordant de diction, ces inflexions naturelles jusqu'à la familiarité, cette amertume d'ironie, cette passion féroce et contenue, toutes choses essentiellement modernes et romantiques, sont les qualités par où elle nous attache. . . . Elle joue le drame de notre temps avec des vers faits il y a deux siècles. . . . S'imaginerait-on par hasard que ce sombre regard, cette voix rauque et profonde, cette pâleur maladive, ce front chargé de toutes les mélancolies de notre âge, ce jeu nerveux, cette rage froide, ce débit dégagé de mélodie . . . ne soient pas du bel et bon drame?¹⁷

These opinions seem to bear out the modern critics who wish to make of Rachel a tragic counterpart of Marie Dorval. However, such judgments are belied by the facts. Rachel was the daughter of an itinerant vendor. She was completely without education, and was no more than a street singer when the family settled in Paris in 1832. After studying singing for a short time, she took elocution lessons from Saint-Aulaire, a retired actor. Discovered by Vedel, the cashier of the Comédie Française, she was given a place at the Conservatoire. In 1837, she accepted a short and profitless engagement at the Théâtre du Gymnase. At the end of the same year, she returned to the Conservatoire and prepared for her debut six months later.¹⁸ How ignorant Rachel was then, Jules Janin himself tells us. On meeting him in 1838, she reminded him that he had already seen her perform at the Gymnase: "C'est moi que j'étais t'au Gymnase."¹⁹ And yet Janin would have us believe that by the miracle of her inspiration Rachel had, completely untutored, transcended her ungrammatical French, her vulgar accent, and satisfied a critical audience by her skill in the most refined and aristocratic of theaters, Racinian tragedy! The fact is that Janin is guilty of a sin of omission: he deliberately ignores the influence on Rachel of her professor at the Conservatoire, Joseph Samson. Was it through personal dislike for this "maître de grammaire" whom he found "insupportable,"²⁰ or was it to exaggerate the importance of his own articles in the education of the actress?²¹ In any case, Janin's injustice was so patent that Samson felt constrained

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 46-47, 65-66, 72, 97, 160.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, V, 236-37; VI, 74.

¹⁸ B. Falk, *Rachel the Immortal* (London, n.d.), pp. 28-38.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

²¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 133: "Il était si charmant d'étudier avec tant de zèle et tant de soins ces vieux chefs-d'œuvre, et de les expliquer à cette enfant."

to issue, immediately after *Rachel et la tragédie* appeared, a *Lettre à M. J. Janin*,²² wherein he modestly claimed his due share in shaping Rachel's talent. This *Lettre*, Samson's memoirs published by his widow,²³ and Rachel's own correspondence,²⁴ all furnish proof that not only did Samson drill Rachel intensively in the months preceding her debut, but that throughout her career she never undertook a new role without consulting him.

As for Gautier, his motives for turning Rachel into a romantic actress are obvious. Realizing that her advent in 1838 was a serious blow to the *drame*, he tried to explain away Racine's revival by claiming that the actress was not really a tragédienne. Thus, the interest aroused by Rachel, he maintained, was purely personal, and the public cared nothing for the tragedies she interpreted:

Chose singulière! mademoiselle Rachel . . . ne s'apercevait pas qu'elle réussissait par le sentiment tout moderne qu'elle y apportait. Le jeune sang qu'elle faisait circuler dans les veines de ces pâles fantômes leur donnait l'apparence de la vie, et attirait la foule, qui ne court que là où quelque chose palpite.²⁵

Also, Gautier tried to stamp out the revival by luring Rachel to the new school. In 1840, when she left Racine temporarily and played in Lebrun's modern tragedy, *Marie Stuart*, Gautier immediately asserted that Rachel had had to desert the classical repertory because the audience was bored and Racine's tragedy was a "moule usé." At the same time, he "regretted" that "mademoiselle Rachel . . . ne soit pas entrée de plain-pied dans le drame moderne."²⁶ In 1843, after Rachel had appeared in *Phèdre*, he cried:

Rachel a . . . joué toutes les tragédies du vieux répertoire . . . maintenant, qu'elle joue les romantiques!²⁷

When Rachel finally did star in *Angelo*, in 1850, Gautier acclaimed her enthusiastically.²⁸ However, critics are almost unanimously of the opinion that Rachel could not act successfully in the *drame*, and that to keep her audiences she was obliged to return to classical tragedy.²⁹ Gautier's bad faith is proved by the complete reversal of his interpretation in an article commemorating Rachel's death in 1858. Summing up her style of acting, he declares that she was "not modern"; her art had "nothing to do with the *drame*." The few plays which she attempted outside the classical repertory "should not be considered" in assessing her talent. Bitterly, he remarks that this very talent brought

²² Paris, 1859.

²³ *Rachel et Samson, souvenirs de théâtre* (Paris, 1898).

²⁴ G. d'Heylli, *Rachel d'après sa correspondance* (Paris, 1882).

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, VI, 74. Cf. also III, 44.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 86-87.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 329.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, VI, 181: "Mlle Rachel s'est emparée du drame comme elle s'était emparée de la tragédie. Elle régnera désormais sans rivale sur l'empire romantique, comme elle régnait naguère sur l'empire classique."

²⁹ Janin, *op. cit.*, pp. 422-25; d'Heylli, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

to a full stop the "great Romantic movement which might have endowed France with a new form of drama."³⁰ Thus, Gautier's final attitude is that of the Romantics at large: Hugo, who called Rachel a "drapeau ennemi";³¹ Vigny, who felt that she lacked tender qualities (à la Dorval);³² Dumas, who never forgave her for abandoning her part in *Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle*;³³ and Vacquerie, who denied her any "spontaneity" or "originality" whatsoever.³⁴

If further proof were needed of the implausibility of the "romantic" interpretation of Rachel's Racine, it could be found in a comparison with Marie Dorval. The latter is invariably described as "disheveled" or "panting," her voice broken with sobs and her eyes filled with tears, her arms twisting in spasmodic gestures, her whole body shaking with frenzied delirium.³⁵ When Dorval tried to outrival Rachel by playing in *Phèdre*, Janin attributed her failure to overacting, to forgetting that a tragédienne must have a "style" and her emotions be restrained, to betraying Racine's heroine through her "interprétation furibonde."³⁶ Rachel, on the other hand, was famous for her statuesque poses, her air of majestic dignity, the utter simplicity of her speech, the care with which she avoided superfluous cries or gestures.³⁷

One might expect, having thus eliminated the "Racine embrasé," to find the key to Rachel's interpretation in the appreciations of those who favor the other extreme. Here too, however, caution must be exercised. Nothing would seem to justify the assertion of James Agate that Rachel was a "reactionary," in the sense that she was a perfect example of traditional acting. The previously quoted remarks of Cuvillier-Fleury and Musset prove that she did not follow that part of tradition which was degenerate. There is no denying either that she had a natural gift for tragedy, since the accounts of her acting which precede her lessons with Samson speak already of her authority and sense of tragic dignity, of her restrained gestures and sobriety.³⁸ On the other hand, full due may be given Samson's instruction, without denying Rachel her share of originality. Samson specialized in comedy. Therefore, he was unprejudiced with regard to the rendering of tragic roles, and left complete liberty to Rachel's inspiration. His great contribution in forming Rachel's style was to introduce into feminine acting the reforms advocated by Talma and executed by the latter in male parts: no declamation, but a simple, natural speech, very

³⁰ *Portraits contemporains*, new ed. (Paris, 1914), pp. 425-26.

³¹ Janin, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

³² *Journal d'un poète* (Paris, 1919), p. 94.

³³ L. Barthou, *Rachel* (1926), p. 55.

³⁴ *Profil et grimaces*, 6th ed. (Paris, 1864), p. 260.

³⁵ Vacquerie, *op. cit.*, pp. 271, 273; Janin, *op. cit.*, pp. 193, 195, 383, 508; Gautier, *Histoire du romantisme* (Paris, 1874), pp. 274-75.

³⁶ *Histoire de la littérature dramatique*, VI (Paris, 1858), 223-25.

³⁷ G. de Molènes "Phèdre et Mlle Rachel," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, nouv. sér., XIII, 1 (1843), 540; A. Houssaye, *Confessions* (Paris, 1885-91), V, 141-43; Musset, *loc. cit.*, XVI, 349; Janin, *Rachel*, p. 19.

³⁸ Falk, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-36.

close to prose; an economy of gesture and movement; a constant striving for truth in expression and attitude.³⁹ Thus, if Rachel was essentially a "classical" actress, she was so in the broadest sense of the word.

To recapitulate, nothing in Rachel's acting justifies the epithet "romantic." By a curious paradox, certain modern critics, in their admiration for Racine and in their desire to justify his revival, have accepted an interpretation of Rachel's style which was launched by a critic who always detested the author, and who did not hesitate to contradict himself a few years later as to the actress. The attraction of this interpretation in modern eyes is explained by the eagerness to render Racine's revival permanent from Rachel onward. Yet, when the actress left the Comédie Française in 1855, the performances of his tragedies dropped immediately to nine, went to five in 1856, and to a single one in 1857. Only when another great tragédienne, Sarah Bernhardt, appeared in *Britannicus* in 1872, did Racine again draw crowds to the Comédie Française.⁴⁰

Rachel's interpretation of Racine can therefore be called "non-romantic," or even "classical," if the latter term is clearly understood. An enlightened tradition inherited from Talma and personal genius had happily combined to create the greatest acting which has perhaps ever been seen on a French stage. However, Rachel's contemporaries, even those who considered themselves proclassical, did not have an understanding of the dramatist equal to her extraordinary presentation. By her deep emotion, rendered all the more potent through rigid control, by her simplicity and spontaneity, by her instinct for using the most unpretentious means to obtain the greatest effects, Rachel created a Racine who is as far removed from the abstract reasoner postulated by Nisard and Saint-Marc Girardin as from the chaste dreamer of Sainte-Beuve. Not until the twentieth century, with Gide, Valéry, Mauriac, and Giraudoux, would the Racine whom Rachel projected by sheer force of intuition, come into being in French criticism.

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³⁹ B. Dussane, *Reines de théâtre* (Paris, 1944), p. 139; Barthou, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁰ Joannidès, *op. cit.* His tragedies jumped to thirty-eight performances in 1872.

LE PROFESSEUR DANS LA LITTÉRATURE FRANÇAISE DEPUIS LA PREMIÈRE GUERRE MONDIALE

By JEAN DAVID

Notre profession est étrange. On ne demande à un ouvrier que de bien exercer son métier, à un médecin de guérir ses malades et de se tenir suffisamment au courant des nouvelles méthodes. On s'attend à tout autre chose d'un professeur. Le public, le contribuable veut qu'il forme des hommes, qu'il soit éducateur; et, pour être éducateur, il faut dire toute la vérité, aussi bien philosophique et religieuse que la vérité psychologique en entendant par cette dernière celle des relations humaines.

La définition impliquée dans l'exigence même du public va considérablement au delà de celle que donnent les dictionnaires Larousse et Darmesteter. Tous deux disent du professeur: "celui qui enseigne un art ou une science" et Larousse s'avance un peu plus en ajoutant "propagateur." Quant à nous il nous semble qu'il convient de désigner ainsi *n'importe quel maître lorsqu'il cesse d'enseigner sa technique pure pour la relier aux principes philosophiques, ou encore pour exprimer ses vues sur la société ou sur l'univers.* Ainsi un maître de langues ou de littérature ou d'histoire peut être aussi spécialiste qu'un mécanicien ou un maître de mécanique lorsqu'il se contente d'exposer son sujet mais ces deux derniers deviennent professeurs dès qu'ils s'élèvent à des vues générales.

Nous allons voir que le professeur a soulevé le blâme, le mépris et la colère dans les deux cas: lorsqu'il est resté spécialiste et lorsqu'il a été vraiment professeur. En somme il ne lui est permis de se montrer ni à droite ni à gauche et le centre pour lui n'est pas très sûr. Des écrivains dont nous parlerons, Claudel, Massis, Duhamel, Céline, et Alain, lui reprochent d'être destructeur des traditions littéraires et philosophiques les plus respectables; Valéry et Sartre le trouvent trop neutre. Pourtant Duhamel avertit que son pédantisme n'est pas le seul, et qu'il y a bien celui de l'homme d'affaires à l'air sublime et préoccupé, au regard lointain. Enfin deux écrivains et professeurs, Romains et Thibaudet, montrent que l'importance prise par le professeur au vingtième siècle est due à des qualités de largeur de vues dont notre temps a particulièrement besoin.

On pourrait peut-être être tenté de croire que nous, professeurs de français aux Etats-Unis, ne sommes pas impliqués dans le débat dont il va s'agir. C'est qu'en effet il sera question de critiques adressées aux membres du haut enseignement français et particulièrement aux professeurs de littérature et de philosophie. Toutefois nous avons là

un exemple privilégié et de même que les grands héros tragiques, tels Oreste et Agamemnon, contiennent les personnages comiques, de même leur histoire est la nôtre.

C'est l'écrivain qui jusqu'au vingtième siècle a attiré l'attention générale et non pas celui qui enseigne; plus à droite, l'écrivain a été rarement favorable à celui-ci. Voltaire par exemple était d'avis que l'université comme l'académie étaient toutes deux ridicules et qu'elles avaient fait leur temps. Selon lui l'université se préoccupe de vétilles érudites mais non point "de démêler la vérité d'avec le mensonge."¹ Victor Hugo se plaignait dans *Les Misérables* qu'on enseignait à l'université "des bêtises payées." Claudel reproche au professeur sa myopie qui consiste à se contenter d'un ordre linéaire et extérieur, à ne pas saisir toute l'importance des textes qu'il explique et surtout à traiter légèrement ce qui le dépasse, bref d'être un liquidateur des valeurs spirituelles au sens moderne où liquidation et suppression sont devenues synonymes. Son vieux dieu Protée, professeur de phoques déjà savants, se métamorphose mais passe toujours par les mêmes transformations, et pour finir ce n'est qu'un petit bourgeois révolutionnaire, c'est à dire conservateur économiquement. Il a fait prisonnier un être de légèreté et de divination, la nymphe Brindosier qui le juge ainsi :

J'ai regardé dans ses phylactères prophétiques où lui-même ne comprend rien, archives du Futur, et j'y ai vu des choses qu'il ne sait pas. Notre délivrance approche,

elle vient en effet, et de Jupiter qui fait tout simplement disparaître de la carte l'île de Naxos où sont les dites archives, comme Protée et ses élèves s'ébrouent au large; joie de ceux-ci :

Nous n'extrairons plus de racines carrées, hurra . . . la mer est libre et nous sommes dedans! elle est infinie et nous dedans.

Cette joie des phoques indigne leur maître: ne leur enseignait-il pas l'hygiène et la morale. Quoi de mieux? Aussi il proteste à Jupiter au nom du bon sens et de ses droits sacrés de propriétaire.²

René Benjamin dans un livre de 1927 blâme, comme Claudel, l'étroitesse du professeur que Faguet voulait précisément capable de tout comprendre et il jure avoir remporté le prix chaque fois qu'il avait émis dans un devoir de français les idées les plus plates et les plus servilement conformistes. Le pion enseignant, dit-il, est un excellent sujet de caricature parce que, si les autres corps constitués prêtent à la satire, du moins devient-elle vite douloureuse: un mauvais député, un mauvais général causent rapidement des difficultés dans l'état mais le professeur est sans conséquence, sauf toutefois à l'étran-

¹ Voltaire, *Œuvres Complètes*, édition Moland (Paris: Garnier, 1877-1885). *Le Sottisier*, Tome 32, p. 553, et *Lettres à Catherine II*, 1769, 14 juillet, Tome 46, p. 382.

² Paul Claudel, *Protée* (Paris, 1914), pp. 202, 203, 130, 108-09, et 93.

ger où, d'une manière éhontée, il se présente comme la pensée de la France. Les Français devraient mettre ordre à cela car :

la plupart des nations qui nous chérissent ont à leur amour deux raisons essentielles, nos vins et nos professeurs.

Il serait trop simple d'attribuer les allégations de Benjamin à la mauvaise humeur ou à la pétulance car l'Espagnol Pío Baroja, par exemple, disait bien de son côté "bête comme un professeur français."³

La même année 1927 paraissait un livre de Massis plus pénétrant que celui de Benjamin. Massis s'en prenait ou plutôt continuait à s'en prendre à l'Ecole Normale Supérieure et au lansonisme. Il les blâmait pour l'affaiblissement de beaucoup de qualités littéraires françaises : goût, finesse, mesure, idées générales précises, sobres synthèses. Selon lui tout cela disparaissait en cédant la place à la manie des bibliographies, à l'étude des sources et au commentaire philologique. De plus, et il y a là non une nuance mais une véritable différence de couleur, les membres de l'enseignement ne forment plus des intellectuels mais des travailleurs intellectuels au vocabulaire de tâcherons et qui nous parlent d'atelier, de "work shop" quand il s'agit de travaux pratiques.⁴

Le professeur Alain est assez d'ur pour ses collègues. A la différence de Massis sa critique est surtout philosophique et non littéraire. Alain, comme Voltaire veut la vérité, veut que le maître enseigne à bien lire, à saisir toute l'idée, "non une pensée d'avant-hier mais une pensée pour demain." Au lieu de cela le professeur se perd dans une érudition d'auteurs oubliés et nous donne la monnaie des grands hommes. Un tel détachement de la réalité ne le rend pourtant pas tolérant, tout au contraire : il est fanatique et bien résolu à former des maîtres qui lui ressemblent.

Duhamel pénètre plus avant et, comme Claudel, élève le débat à la hauteur de l'intelligence. Son professeur Fauvet, biologiste et bel esprit, est un esprit et un cœur secs :

Il s'agissait pour lui non de vérifier des dogmes par l'observation et l'expérience mais au contraire d'inscrire à toute force les matériaux de la vie dans le gabarit d'une idéologie vétillaue.

C'est aussi un homme lâche qui, au nom de "l'investigation inconditionnée" se prépare toujours une voie de retraite. La famille de sa femme, Cécile, et Cécile elle-même lui servent de repoussoir. Celle-ci, brillante pianiste de concert, s'étant rendu compte que sa famille était artiste mais quelque peu déséquilibrée avait décidé pour com-

³ René Benjamin, *La Farce de la Sorbonne* (Paris, 1927), pp. 26, 27, 11, et 25. Je me hâte d'ajouter que Pío Baroja en disant cela dans *Juventud y Egoítria* ne compare pas le professeur français à ceux des nations environnantes et j'ai par ailleurs la certitude qu'il sait faire le point.

⁴ Henri Massis, *Evocations, Souvenirs, 1905-1911* (Paris, 1931), pp. 17, 115, et 62.

penser, d'épouser quelqu'un de tempérament opposé; le résultat du projet n'a pas été heureux et il n'est pas surprenant qu'elle déclare ne pas aimer l'intelligence de cet "intellectuel pur" et chercher la vérité en prenant le contrepied de ses affirmations.⁵

Céline a dénoncé la forme d'intelligence anti-traditionaliste qu'il trouve chez le psychiatre moderne lequel est professeur puisqu'il explique la vie de l'esprit: "Je suis pris de blême panique, Ferdinand, ma raison me trahit rien qu'à les écouter"; les psychiatres professeurs nous étirent, nous subliment, nous tracassent l'entendement "du côté infernal... du côté dont on ne revient pas."⁶

Jusqu'ici nous avons examiné les opinions d'écrivains qui généralement appartenaient à la droite ou au centre droit. Or depuis 1940 ce sont deux écrivains du centre gauche qui nous parlent du professeur pour railler ou critiquer sa neutralité comme l'avaient fait en somme Voltaire et Duhamel. Valéry n'a peut-être pas pensé au professeur en dessinant son Faust mais son héros en est un, qui enseigne et a des disciples. Faust a l'illusion de vivre toutes les vies, de tout comprendre et de tout considérer mais lui-même et le diable se perdent dans ses considérations, lui en les faisant et Méphistophélès à les suivre:

Ta tête docte est si abstruse, si compliquée, si brouillée de connaissances bizarres... que je ne sais jamais à quoi tu vas, ce que tu veux, puisque tu n'en sais rien toi-même et que je ne puis donc en savoir plus que toi.

On parle depuis 1914 de "vertus diaboliques"; tel est bien le détachement de Faust, orienté vers Moscou ou le diable, tout comme celui du professeur de Normale Supérieure. Ainsi Faust dit à Méphistophélès:

Je veux finir léger, délié à tout jamais de tout ce qui ressemble à quelque chose... Et m'en aller vers toi.

La série de questions que se pose Faust est limitée: elle part du non, y reste et y aboutit. La chute au fond d'un précipice, chez les Fées marque la fin de la pièce et l'une d'elles lui dit: "Tu ne sais que nier." La pièce semble donc conclure que si les vues "extrémistes" de droite et de gauche sont partielles le centre ne doit pas entretenir l'illusion d'en avoir de différentes.⁷

C'est encore la position centriste qui est en question dans la pièce de Sartre *Les Mouches* quoique bien entendu le point de vue change. Le Précepteur est tiré de la quiétude de sa neutralité par son disciple qui n'est personne de moindre qu'Oreste. Oreste n'a que faire de cette liberté dont son précepteur croit lui avoir fait cadeau: c'est une liberté vide, abstraite, ridicule qui l'a déraciné, détaché de sa famille, de toute religion et de toute vocation. Il en est de la liberté comme de l'argent: elle vaut par le fait qu'on s'en sépare. Et Oreste d'envier un

⁵ Georges Duhamel, *La Famille des Pasquier, Cécile parmi nous* (1938), pp. 59, 45, et 172.

⁶ L.-F. Céline, *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (Paris, 1934), pp. 521-22.

⁷ Paul Valéry, *Mon Faust*, et *Le Solitaire ou Les Malédiction d'Univers* (Paris, 1946), pp. 40, 51, et 248.

chien qui a davantage de souvenirs que lui et qui peut appeler quel-qu'un son maître. Et il entraîne avec lui son précepteur vers sa ville natale d'Argos, c'est à dire vers sa famille, ses morts et le spectre de ses dieux. Son cœur lourd a rejeté l'attitude du bourgeois révolutionnaire.⁸

Remontons maintenant avant 1940 et nous trouvons chez deux professeurs une apologie et une défense de leurs collègues. L'apologie vient de l'ancien professeur Jules Romains chez qui la discussion philosophique reste, pour le sujet qui nous occupe, tout à fait à l'arrière plan dans ses *Hommes de Bonne Volonté*. Son personnage de Jerphanion est même d'avis que pour soulager les misères il faut agir au plus vite, par une opération d'état et sans déranger les principes, pensée plutôt audacieuse dans son rationalisme que révolutionnaire. On se souvient que Jerphanion, étant allé dîner chez un oncle, avait dû traverser un quartier populaire de Paris qui lui avait révélé la misère. La discussion ici est sociale. Romains ou son héros est à la recherche d'une église comme l'indique le titre d'un des romans de la série. Moscou est au bout de son chemin et la pensée le tente mais Jerphanion s'arrête en route. Il semble faire halte à l'église saint simonienne. En effet au cours de sa magnifique carrière politique Jerphanion oriente ses concitoyens vers les grandes idées et les perspectives de paix mondiale. On croit parfois à la lecture du livre entendre un débat entre deux doctrines sociales : le saint simonisme où dominant le professeur et l'artiste humanitaire et, plus à droite, la doctrine officieuse du libéralisme, celle d'Auguste Comte et aujourd'hui de James Burnham, où l'état est dominé en fait et en droit par les industriels et les techniciens.⁹

Un autre professeur Albert Thibaudet est d'avis que la "théologie" de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure est tournée vers Moscou. Or son livre au titre significatif, *La République des Professeurs*, signale la grande importance prise par cette école. Ce faisant l'auteur écrit une page de l'évolution des classes. Il fait ressortir que la France du début du XX^{ème} siècle était dominée par des avocats : Barrès, Poincaré, mais qu'une équipe nouvelle arrivait au pouvoir en 1924 avec des professeurs de Normale Supérieure, Blum, Herriot, ce qui marquait un glissement à gauche. Ces hommes nouveaux apportaient des réformes dont la France avait besoin. Cette dernière assertion de Thibaudet se trouve corroborée du fait que le professeur n'a pas, que nous sachions, été attaqué dans la littérature française pour ses idées sociales ou économiques mais philosophiques. Thibaudet montre l'importance du professeur non seulement dans l'état mais aussi pour l'éducation de la bourgeoisie, au lycée, surtout dans la chaire de philosophie ; im-

⁸ Jean-P. Sartre, *The Flies* (New York, 1947), p. 78.

⁹ Jules Romains, *Les Hommes de Bonne Volonté* : Tome 6, *Les Humbles*, p. 220 ; Tome 7, *Recherche d'une Eglise*, p. 11 ; Tome 23, *Naissance de la bande*, p. 152.

portance qui s'aperçoit dans la formation générale des jeunes gens en France et en Italie, formation meilleure que celle des autres pays. Mais Thibaudet ne cache pas les défauts du professeur : on reste parfois dans l'enseignement comme on reste dans l'armée, faute d'avoir trouvé autre chose ; et puis on choisit souvent cette profession par une certaine incapacité à vivre. Toutefois il produit vite l'argument de la défense :

Ne serait-il pas aussi vrai qu'on embrasse les professions utiles en suite de quelqu'incapacité à penser librement ? Ne méprisons personne, pas même nous, et reconnaissons dans tout travail les spécialisations, les abdications nécessaires. Les possibles ne coexistent que dans l'entendement divin.

Contribuer à écarter la menace d'un autre conflit général est du devoir de tout homme et particulièrement du professeur puisque la modération est pour lui un devoir d'état. Les attaques ci-dessus indiquent que la neutralité à vide de jadis doit être écartée, dépassée ou simplement complétée. Thibaudet montre la voie en faisant apercevoir une autre neutralité, en indiquant une position moyenne entre la neutralité vide et le point de vue de l'homme d'église. Si le domaine du prêtre est celui de la croyance, celui de l'idéologie appartient au professeur. *Il convient au professeur de se tenir au point mort des croyances*, je voudrais pouvoir dire des parousies, et il se doit à l'occasion de les exposer. C'est la position que semble avoir voulu occuper Thibaudet : "Je suis non point neutre par démission mais neutralisé par position." Toujours de cette position, il porte un coup au totalitarisme culturel de l'état en examinant les titres des croyances ou églises à vivre et à posséder :

aucune propriété ne me semble plus éminente que celle des grandes corporations spirituelles.¹⁰

Un regard sur l'horizon actuel achève de persuader la nécessité d'une neutralité nouvelle : Paul Valéry dans un chapitre sur l'orient¹¹ déclarait que l'abus nous est naturel, à nous occidentaux, et il citait en exemple que nous sommes scandalisés de ce que les Chinois, après avoir inventé la poudre, ne s'en soient pas servis comme moyen offensif. L'abus nous est naturel aussi en matière intellectuelle et c'est ce qu'impliquait récemment sur le campus de l'université du Washington, un hindou de l'ancien "Congress Party," M. Muzumdar en faisant remarquer quelle fausse perspective résultait de faire toujours commencer, en occident, les histoires littéraire, artistique et philosophique à partir de la Grèce antique.

Ne semblerait-il pas naturel que le professeur soit le premier désormais, non pas à rester replié sur lui-même dans la neutralité, ni

¹⁰ Albert Thibaudet, *La République des Professeurs* (Paris, 1927), pp. 46, 223, 8, et 66.

¹¹ Paul Valéry, *Regards sur le monde actuel* (Paris, 1931).

à voyager dans le cercle limité du Faust de Valéry, mais à faire, en compagnie de ses disciples le tour du monde intellectuellement, aujourd'hui qu'il est si facile de voyager de toute autre manière?

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SPEAKING OF THE PRIORESS

By DOM MAYNARD J. BRENNAN, O.S.B.

A highly significant development in the many interpretations of Chaucer's Prioress was given in 1925 by Sister M. Madeleva.¹ Her purpose was to set the nun against her proper background, the life of a Benedictine Sister—a consideration that had been largely overlooked by other critics. Taking up the line of study begun by Sister Madeleva, still using the rule of St. Benedict as a necessary background, I intend to make a few additional comments and suggestions on the nature of the Prioress. As a Benedictine monk, I would like especially to enlarge upon Sister Madeleva's presentation of Benedictine tradition. The focal point of these comments will be four lines in the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse,
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy . . .
Ful well she soong the service dyvyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely . . .

It has often been shown that Chaucer, when he describes the smile of the Prioress, depends on the terminology of Courtly Love.² The subsequent linking of this finding with the statement that it *peyned hire to countrefete cheere of court* is both striking and spontaneous. Apparently, her art of smiling was just another instance of her assiduity in acquiring a lady-like, courtly, stately manner.

Granting for the present that Chaucer might have had the courtly tradition in mind when he wrote this description, still we cannot overlook an important ruling on laughter imposed by St. Benedict on Madame Eglentyne, as well as on all his spiritual followers. Sister Madeleva also goes to the Rule of St. Benedict for her explanation of *symple* and *coy*; smiling was the minimum of cheer "she must have felt for strangers, at home and abroad," according to the law of hospitality inculcated in Chapter 53 of the Rule.³ This, of course, is true enough; but there is certainly a more direct and obvious teaching on smiling to be adduced from Benedictine legislation. The Rule has always admonished that laughter should be controlled, unaffected, and *silent*. The phrase *symple* and *coy* has a recognizable resemblance to the courtly tradition, no one can gainsay that; but it has a closer resemblance to the monastic law.

Linderbauer, in his most authoritative edition of the Rule of St. Benedict, gives the following sentence in Chapter 7: *Decimus*

¹ Sister M. Madeleva, *Chaucer's Nuns and Other Essays* (New York, 1925), pp. 3-29. Review of Sister Madeleva's *Chaucer's Nuns*, in *Year's Work in English Studies* (1925), p. 92; also in *Saturday Review of Literature*, I (1925), 852.

² John Livingston Lowes, "Simple and Coy," *Anglia*, XXXIII (1910), 440-42.

³ Madeleva, *Chaucer's Nuns*, pp. 8-9.

*humilitatis gradus est, si non sit facilis ac promptus in risu, quia scriptum est: Stultus in risu exaltat vocem suam.*⁴ In the following sentence Benedict elaborates on the idea by advising his children to speak mildly, without undue laughter and in a non-clamorous voice.⁵ The mental association of *non clamorosus in voce* with coy—or silent, which is the real meaning of the word—comes naturally to any Benedictine.

The consensus of all commentators on the Rule leads us to understand that St. Benedict scarcely forbids laughter itself; he does, however, insist upon a silent laugh. With unusual severity he cautions one against "raising up" his voice in laughter; yet his customary mildness does not allow him to abolish laughter in the monastery altogether. This is the interpretation that has been drummed into the ears of novices by their Masters down through the centuries.

Our Holy Father does not condemn laughter; a monk habitually gloomy and morose would show that he does not "run in the way of the commandments with that sweetness of love"⁶ which St. Benedict promises to those who are faithful. What the Holy Legislator intends to proscribe first of all... is the evil kind of laughter which has its source in an underlying coarseness in nature... then St. Benedict above all condemns an habitual disposition to laugh readily, noisily, and on all and every occasion; the habitual tendency to jest.⁷

A key to the Benedictine tradition can be gained from Martene's commentary on the Rule (1690-1710); the restrained laugh, the silent smile, is incalculated in no uncertain terms.⁸

There is extant today a Northern Metrical Version of the Rule—fifteenth century—that is not so important for its careful rendition of the literal meaning of the Rule as it is for its distinct English flavor. The verses on the tenth degree of humility might well have had the Prioress in mind.

The x degre es thus to lere:
Not to lagh with ouer-lyght cher
Ne with laghing our voce to raise.
For hali writ thus leres & sais:
"A fole," he sais, "bi day & nyght
In laghyng rais his vose on hight."
Tharfor es gude to man & childe
For to ler at be laghter-myld
And of al cowntnanse myld & stil
With-outyn any mater of il.⁹

⁴ *St. Benedicti Regula Monachorum*, herausgegeben und philologisch erklärt von Benno Linderbauer, O.S.B. (Metten, 1922), cap. VII, p. 48.

⁵ *Idem*.

⁶ *Regula*, Prologue.

⁷ Dom Columba Marmion, O.S.B., *Christ the Ideal of the Monk* (London, 1926), pp. 236-37.

⁸ Edmond Martene, *Regula Commentata*, cap. VII; Migne, *Patrologiae Latinae Cursus Completus*, LXVI (Paris, 1857-1859), 405-06.

⁹ *The Northern Prose Version of the Rule of St. Benet*, ed. Ernst A. Kock, E.E.T.S., o. s., No. 120 (1902), p. 77.

The *laghter-myld* of Benedictine tradition is altogether too pertinent to ignore completely when considering the *symple and coy* smile of the Prioress. Professor Manly has aptly demonstrated the close connection Chaucer had with the Convent of St. Leonard.¹⁰ He points out, furthermore, that it is not difficult "to accumulate an abundance of new material" illustrating the realistic accuracy and vivid truth of the portrait of the Prioress. Certainly no one will doubt that Chaucer and his contemporaries were well acquainted with the Rule of St. Benedict. As an unusually keen observer of human nature, with a passion for study of different classes,¹¹ he would not curb a natural tendency to understand the customs—and the reason behind these customs—of the ubiquitous Benedictines.

Although Chaucer presumably had first-hand knowledge of the chanting of the Divine Office by Benedictines in their monasteries, it is not necessary to infer such knowledge from his intimate description of how the Prioress as an individual sang the Office. Familiarity with a peculiar method of singing could have been gained outside of the monastery. Once again, let us appeal to the Benedictine Rule and tradition. The Brethren who are laboring at a great distance from the monastery, or who are on a long journey, are severely enjoined by Benedict to recite the canonical hours with the proper decorum and liturgical rites, so far as it is humanly possible.¹²

All the recognized authorities on Benedictine law—Martene, Calmet, and Delatte, to mention only three outstanding men—assert that the custom of reciting the Office in the work-fields, or on a long journey, was a general one. The recitation of these prayers outside the monastery and in public was not original with the legislation of St. Benedict. Many pre-Benedictine monastic laws prescribed the custom.¹³ In fact, the practice became so defined that a dispute arose as to whether or not the Rule of Benedict demanded genuflections by those who were riding on horseback. *Quamvis, inquit, sensum proprium S. Benedicti proprie nesciamus, tamen melius est, ut si possunt, qui equitant in terram descendant, et officium suum flectentes genua faciant.*¹⁴

¹⁰ John Matthews Manly, *Some New Light on Chaucer* (New York, 1926), pp. 203-12; "The Prioress of Stratford," *Times Literary Supplement*, November 10, 1927, p. 817; Edith Rickert, "Elizabeth Chausin, a Nun at Barking," *TLS*, May 18, 1933, p. 348.

¹¹ John Livingston Lowes, *Geoffrey Chaucer and the Development of His Genius* (Boston, 1934), p. 202.

¹² *Regula*, ed. Linderbauer, cap. I, p. 69.

¹³ "Si in navi fuerit, et in monasterio, et in agro et in itinere, et in quolibet ministerio, orandi et psallendi tempora non praetermittat." (*Ex Regula S. Pachomii*, cap. cxlii.) "Si corporaliter non occurrat adesse cum ceteris ad orationis locum, in quocumque loco inventus fuerit, quod devotionis est expleat." (*Ex Regula S. Basilii*, cap. cvii.) Cf. *Concordia Regularum S. Benedicti Aniani*, P.L., ciii, 1203-08.

¹⁴ Martene, *Regula Commentata*, P.L., LXVI, 745. Compare also Dom Paul Delatte, *The Rule of St. Benedict*, translated by Dom Justin McCann (London, 1921), p. 323; Augustine Calmet, *Commentarius Litteralis, Historico-Moralis in Regulam S.P. Benedicti* (Lincii, 1750), p. 124.

At first glance it might not appear noteworthy that "when the time for reciting the Hour seemed to have come a monk got down from his horse [long journeys were rarely made on foot], took off his head-gear and travelling gloves, and prayed in the same way and in the same posture as he would have done in choir; when the Hour was started thus, he remounted his horse and continued the psalmody."¹⁵ The practice is mentioned here to highlight the conclusion that Chaucer and his contemporaries could not have failed to notice the monks and nuns saying their Office; their gestures made it only too obvious.

The Office was not only *seen*, it was also *heard*. Martene declares that they may recite the Office secretly, *sine cantu, sibi solum si sint soli*; but if there are two or more making the journey, then the Office must be fulfilled by chanting it alternately, aloud, and in common.¹⁶ Since the Canterbury-ward Prioress was not alone, the latter regulations would have applied to her; she was obliged to recite the psalms aloud with her companion or companions. It may be incidentally remarked that the monk, since he was traveling without a *socius* from his monastery, was not obliged to a public recitation. That circumstance was a felicitous one for him, we may be assured.

Finally, this custom, which had originated with St. Basil, became more common with St. Benedict and his followers, continued down beyond Chaucer's age, and remained at least through the fifteenth century. The Northern Metrical Version of the Rule, edited by Dr. Ernest Kock in 1902, amply illustrates this.

Thai that sal walk bi way, or wirk,
And may not cum to haly kirk,
In what stede so thai be sett,
Their seruyse sal thai not for-gete,
Bot kepe all the oures of the day
With als grete honoure os thai may,
And say ther seruyse in ilk seson
With wil & gude deuocioun.¹⁷

Before this point is abandoned for another, it would be appropriate to stress, in case there should arise any doubts, that the Prioress was bound to follow the Rule as strictly as any monks; there was no relaxation of the prescription of Chapter 50 in favor of nuns. "Now all our extant copies of Aethelwold's translation (with one exception) speak of monks, not nuns—yet the survival here and there of a feminine pronoun shows that the original from which these manuscripts were copied must have been for nuns, not monks."¹⁸

¹⁵ Delatte, *The Rule*, p. 323.

¹⁶ Martene, *Regula Commentata*, P.L., LXVI, 745.

¹⁷ *The Northern Prose Version*, p. 101.

¹⁸ R. W. Chambers, *The Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and His School*, published separately, also (originally) in Harpsheld's *Life of More*, E.E.T.S., o. s. No. 186 (1932), p. xcii. Compare also *The Northern Prose Version*, p. x.

The verdict that Chaucer was familiar with the practice of chanting the Office leads us to a further point. The *elvyssh* poet who ever stared upon the ground managed to notice, strange to say, that the Prioress sang the Office *ful wel*. Whether the excellence of her singing was due to her manner of singing *in hir nose ful semely*, or whether it was excellent despite this manner, is a matter of conjecture. Professor Manly remarks that he has never seen a satisfactory explanation of the lines.¹⁹ His own explanation of the lines is that nasal recitation was—and still is, for that matter—traditional in the Catholic Gregorian Chant. Despite the fact that he bases this explanation on experience which “has demonstrated that this mode of voice production is less fatiguing than the ordinary mode of singing,” and cites Dr. J. Lewis Browne, St. Patrick’s Church in Chicago, as his witness,²⁰ I find it hard to accept this handy solution of the passage. For one thing, present-day practice of monastic choirs proves conclusively that nasal recitation is not the tradition today, Dr. Browne to the contrary notwithstanding. There is no better way of proving this than by visiting and listening to these choirs in Europe and America. Collegio di Sant’ Anselmo, the Benedictine house of studies in Rome, strictly forbids such an affectation. The same prohibition is implicit in America. The oldest Benedictine establishment in North America, St. Vincent Archabbey, Pennsylvania, automatically excludes anyone from the *Schola Cantorum* who does not sing in clear pure tones. This exclusion is justly based on the *Tyrociniūm Benedictinūm* which emphatically states that the Office is to be chanted *non . . . de naribus sonando*.²¹ Assuming that this handbook of Benedictines is an index to monastic practice, we can justly disclaim any contention that nasal recitation is traditional in the Church—nor has it been traditional for the last two centuries at least.²² The Solesmes regulation for the proper method of chanting, which has the official approbation of the Sacred Council of Rites, clearly opposes any inclination to sound the Office through the nose. *Evitez donc . . . de chanter de la gorge et du nez. . . . Donnez votre voix simplement, sans affectation ni recherche*.²³

Of course, this is not fourteenth-century evidence, but nevertheless it is significant in demonstrating recent tradition. Since Manly’s testimony for the former tradition of Chaucer’s time rests upon contemporary tradition, then indeed that testimony falls down when his premise falls. On the other hand, there is no way of presenting positive incontestable proof that the Office was generally not *entuned in*

¹⁹ Manly, *New Light*, p. 216.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

²¹ *Tyrociniūm Benedictinūm* (*Typis Archiabbatiae S. Vincentii*, Pennsylvania, 1894), pp. 77-78.

²² The *Tyrociniūm* was compiled by Giles Bartscherer (1730-1799) as a practical daily guide based upon tradition.

²³ *Principes Traditionnels d’Execution du Chant Gregorien d’apres l’Ecole de Solesmes* (Paris, 1929), pp. 40-41.

hir nose during the fourteenth century. The burden of proof, however, still rests with those who will contend that past traditions conflict with the known tradition of the past two centuries. As for the rest, will it be considered gratuitous if we state that Chaucer noted the nasal quality of the Prioress' psalm-chanting, either because it was peculiar to her, or to her small community, and as such was worthy of record? When the nuns allowed the other pilgrims to draw ahead and began their daily Office, Chaucer also slackened his pace and carefully noted that the Prioress, as the leader of the group, intoned the Hours with a decided nasal twang that was entirely in harmony with, and the result of, her consciousness of French after the *scole of Stratford atte Bowe*.

There is little that can be added to the portrait of the Prioress as an individual person. There has been quite enough added already. The best conclusion we can gain from scholarly studies is that she is interesting, captivating, even an intriguing personality. And that indeed is the important object in any study. She stands out among the Pilgrims as demure and distinctly feminine—and capable of varied interpretation. In all sanity, no woman, alive or dead, can demand any more from a biographer.

There is only one feature of certain studies that could be interpreted—if one is sensitive in these matters—as a direct slur on the religious life of woman in general. That is the statement marking out the submergence of the woman and the frustration of the would-be mother in the Prioress. I do believe the Prioress, with all her vaunted good sense of humor, would feel insulted at this. It is not necessary to construe the gentleness of a nun toward children and kindness toward dumb animals as signs of a frustrated motherhood and a smothered womanhood. Motherhood is lost in the religious life; but it does not reject the Sisters, they reject it. As for womanhood, that is not lost at all; it neither rejects, nor is rejected.

Since Chaucer's art of comedy frequently depends upon contrast, searchers for the humor in our Prioress' portrait must look to the contrasting elements between her and the other characters in the "Human Comedy." The first contrast which meets the eye is the contrast between the Prioress and the bold, demanding, overwhelming Wife of Bath. What could be more divergent than the prologues to the Wife's and the Prioress' Tales: the rollicking reminiscence of a life of many loves and the divine invocation to the story of a *litel clergeon*, seven years of age. Of all the remaining contrasts, those furnished by the other religious are the most obtrusive: between the *ful curious pyn with a love-knotte in the gretter ende*—something that hardly admits of a spiritual taste in the *reccheles* Monk—and the brooch of gold with its *Amor vincit omnia*—which, at least to the Prioress' way of thinking, was fundamentally religious. Both the Parson and the Prioress, I believe, are first and foremost cast in a religious mold; but they have diverse ideas on what is compatible with their spiritual

life, for the Parson waited after no pompe and reverence and the Prioress peyned hire to contrefete cheere of court, and to be estatlich of manere, and to ben holden digne of reverence.

Finally, it must not be imagined that Madame Eglentyne is just an ordinary nun. She is a Prioress. As such, she was either second in command of her community—the Abbess having the higher authority—or, if her community was small and there was no Abbess—as seems to have been the case—she was first in command. If the first be true, then she was entirely dependent upon her Abbess for her office, for her policy while in office, and for the very duration of that office. If the latter be true, then she was elected by popular vote of the community and held all the administrative power that an Abbess usually exercised (Rule of St. Benedict, Chapters 64 and 65). In either case the Prioress enjoyed an enviable position in her convent. Today the office of prioress, like that of abbess, is not familiar to us. There are no such offices in America, and they are becoming increasingly rare in Europe.

As a person of quality in her own circle, she falls in line with the general trend of Chaucer's characters. He simply refuses to paint a common, ordinary, and non-distinctive character. We meet no run-of-the-mill knight in the *Canterbury Tales*; here we find a *verray, parfit gentil knyght*. The Monk is the best of his type, a *fair for the maistrie*; in *alle the ordres fourre is noon that kan so muchel of daliaunce and fair langage as the Friar*. There was nowhere swich a *vavasour* as the *Frankeleyn*; and the Parson of the Town! a *better preest I trowe that nowhere noon ys*. So greet a *purchasour* was nowhere noon, ne was ther swich another *pardonour*, as those found in the immortal Prologue. And, if all England could discover a more interesting Prioress than this one, then surely Chaucer was not so observant as we are inclined to believe. We are forced to acknowledge that Chaucer searched far and wide for a Prioress par excellence. If she is not *sui generis*, then she has no right to answer the roll call of those unique characters in the *Canterbury Tales*.

She had such a curious mixture of conscience, so *charitable and pitous*, and of *tendre herte*; she was so *ful pleasaunt and amyable port* that she would attract attention anywhere.

For the most part we cannot judge a person's spirituality from externals; we cannot even be dogmatically certain, with Kittredge, that the Pardoner was the one lost soul in the crowd.²⁴ The Prioress was such a compound of courtly manners and quaint habits that a judgment is especially temerarious in her case. "She is certainly not a saint," says Professor Patch.²⁵ "She is certainly not a devil," is the final remark of this paper; that is judgment enough.

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²⁴ George Lyman Kittredge, *Chaucer and His Poetry* (Cambridge, 1936), p. 180.

²⁵ Howard Rollin Patch, *On Rereading Chaucer* (Cambridge, 1939), p. 151 f.

FRENCH VERSE IN THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE POETICAL MISCELLANIES, 1600-1660

By ALBERTA TURNER

During the reigns of the first two Stuarts and Cromwell, the study of French was more neglected by members of the English universities than by any other educated group in the kingdom. Although courtiers, statesmen, lawyers, merchants, and military men found a knowledge of French so essential in social and business intercourse that they studied under private tutors, attended the classes of Huguenot refugees, and traveled on the Continent to acquire it, the average university man often found himself embarrassingly silent in polite London circles.¹ Not that he lacked opportunity to study French: many French-speaking refugees lived at the universities, and some held classes and even published French grammars for university students. But the university curriculum recognized the study of no vernacular; Latin and Greek were the only spoken languages permitted by college statute (though frequently neglected in practice); and those who published French grammars for university students felt compelled to justify their subject by calling it a recreation from more "serious" studies.

Nevertheless, even in the universities there is evidence that a steady and diverse minority knew French and appreciated it as the language of courtly compliment. In the sixty-eight or more poetical miscellanies published by Oxford and Cambridge between 1600 and 1660 to celebrate the death of a college benefactor or an important event in the royal family, we find twenty-two volumes containing a total of thirty-two original French poems by twenty-four authors. The poems were distributed evenly throughout the period in quantities ranging from one to three per volume.² They were written mostly by Oxford men, since there was more active interest in the study of French at Oxford than at Cambridge during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,³ and since Oxford published more and larger miscellanies and was generally more eager to please royalty than was her sister university. Though the number of French poems is far smaller than that of Latin, Greek, or even Hebrew, it is the largest number in any modern language except English.

The appearance of French in some miscellanies and not in others was often determined by the nature of the occasion: Elizabeth was noted for her fluency in many languages; so the volumes on her death

¹ Kathleen Lambley, *The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language in England during Tudor and Stuart Times* (New York, 1920), Chap. VI, *passim*.

² Miss Lambley mentions only one of these; has apparently seen none of them.

³ Lambley, *op. cit.*, pp. 199, 205, 207.

contain poems in Italian, French, and Spanish, as well as in Latin and Greek. Queen Henrietta Maria spoke neither English nor Latin when she married Charles I; so in the miscellany on her wedding, in seven of those celebrating the births of her children, and in the volume which welcomed her return from Holland during the civil war, we find poems in her native tongue. In some miscellanies, however, such as that on the resurrection of a woman hanged for child murder, there seems to have been no reason for using French except the whim of the author.

The twenty-four authors represent all types of university members: five were natives of French-speaking regions,⁴ who, to escape persecution or to seek learning, came to study or teach at the universities. These would not only have found their native language easiest but would have contributed French poems in the same spirit as ambassadors bringing gifts of foreign produce. Two others were mature Englishmen, whose position required a special knowledge of French:⁵ John Sandford, Chaplain of Magdalen College, Oxford, taught French extra-curricularly to Oxford students and published a grammar for them, *Le Guichet Francois* . . . (1604). Thomas Tanner, senior proctor of Oxford (1660), had written two books of French history. Both these might be expected to contribute French poems to exhibit their professional skills, the same motive which made the Regius Professor of Hebrew write poems in Hebrew or the lecturer in Anglo-Saxon write in Old English. Still others were noblemen's or gentlemen's sons,⁶ who would be expected to know French in order to take their inherited positions in society, and who were customarily exposed to

⁴ Daniel Brevint, *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera* (Oxford, 1640), sig. A1^v.

Meric Casaubon, *Jacobi Ara Deo Reduci* (Oxford, 1617), sig. 13^r.

Edward Meetkerke, *Iusta Oxoniensium* (Oxford, 1612), sig. F2^v; *Jacobi Ara Deo Reduci* (Oxford, 1617), sig. D3^r; *Ultima Linea Savilii* (Oxford, 1622), sig. B1^r & ^v; *Epithalamia Oxoniensia* (Oxford, 1625), sig. L2^v.

Jean Poingdextre, *Flos Britannicus* (Oxford, 1637), sigs. 2, 3^v-2, 4^r.

John Verneuil, *Britanniae Natalis* (Oxford, 1630), p. 47; *Threni Exoniensium* (Exeter College, Oxford, 1613), p. 29.

⁵ John Sandford, *Academiae Oxoniensis Pietas* (Oxford, 1603), p. 58.

Thomas Tanner, *Britannia Rediviva* (Oxford, 1660), sig. a3^r.

⁶ Brian Darcy, probably "gen." of Essex, *Luctus Posthumus* (Oxford, 1612), p. 56.

Thomas Goad, son of Roger Goad, Provost of King's, Cambridge, *Threnothriambeuticon* (Cambridge, 1603), p. 67.

John Herbert, son of Philip, Earl of Pembroke, *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera* (Oxford, 1640), sigs. 23^v-24^r.

Denzil Holles, son of John, Earl of Clare, *Epicedium Cantabrigiense* (Cambridge, 1612), pp. 100-103 [sic].

Dudley Loftus, son of Sir Adam Loftus, vice-treasurer of Ireland, *ΠΡΟΤΕΙΑ Anglo-Batava* (Oxford, 1641), sig. B2^v.

William Seymour, son of William, Earl of Hertford, *Coronae Carolinae Quadratura* (Oxford, 1636), sig. aal^r & ^v.

Frederick Tonstall, "eq. aur. fil." *Britanniae Natalis* (Oxford, 1630), pp. 46-47; *Solis Britannici Perigaeum* (Oxford, 1633), sig. N1^v.

Charles Vane, son of Sir Henry Vane, *Musarum Oxoniensium Charisteria* (Oxford, 1638), sig. E3^r.

Edward Vane, brother of Charles, *ibid.*, sig. E3^r & ^v.

the language early by tutors, travel, and study abroad (as were Darcy and perhaps Charles Vane), or by residence at the Inns of Court, which required some knowledge of French for the study of law and near which many of the Huguenot refugees held their classes (as were Darcy and both Vane brothers).

The rest of the contributors had no ostensible reason for knowing French before entering the universities. Of the remaining eight we can identify seven,⁷ all natives of England: three are "pleb." from Northamptonshire, Cumberland, Gloucestershire, respectively⁸; two are sons of clerics from Hampshire and Cumberland⁹; and two are of unknown background.¹⁰ Though we do not know how they learned the language¹¹ before contributing French poems to the miscellanies, the later careers of several of these men show that they would have considered French as important a part of their training as would noblemen's or gentlemen's sons. Henry Lucas became a barrister of the Middle Temple; Joseph Williamson became a barrister and later secretary of state; Thomas Tully became principal of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, and one of the royal chaplains in ordinary to Charles II. Only two held minor clerical positions.¹²

This diverse but small list cannot show that knowledge of French at the universities was more extensive than hitherto supposed, but it does support the belief that even in these strongholds of learned languages, knowledge of French was a recognized asset, to be acquired by those who planned to exchange academic shelter for worldly competition and to be used by those fortunate enough to have it, as a means of proving their urbanity to king and court. Though the number writing French is absurdly small compared to the number writing Latin and Greek, it becomes significant when we realize that it represents a fair cross section of university membership, that rarely more than one-twentieth of the university population contributed to any

⁷ Joshua Gruchy, Pembroke College, Oxford, remains unidentified. He contributed French poems to *Musarum Oxoniensium* 'ΕΛΛΙΟΦΟΡΙΑ (Oxford, 1654), p. 90.

⁸ Henry Lucas, *Flos Britannicus* (Oxford, 1637), first unsig. leaf 4^r & v.

Thomas Tully, *Musarum Oxoniensium* ΕΠΙΒΑΘΡΙΑ (Oxford, 1643), sig. Aa2^r & v.

Samuel Wilson, *Coronae Carolinae Quadratura* (Oxford, 1636), sig. B3^r.

⁹ Edward Evans, *Oxoniensis Academiae Funebre Officium* (Oxford, 1603), pp. 64-65.

Joseph Williamson, *Newes from the Dead* (Oxford, 1651), p. 6; *Musarum Oxoniensium* 'ΕΛΛΙΟΦΟΡΙΑ (Oxford, 1654), p. 92.

¹⁰ Thomas Bowyer, *Britanniae Natalis* (Oxford, 1630), p. 48.

Thomas French, *Vitis Carolinae Gemma Altera* (Oxford, 1633), sigs. L2^v-L3^r.

¹¹ The grammar schools, like the universities, taught only Latin, Greek, and sometimes Hebrew. "There is probably not a single case of the provision for the teaching of a modern language by school statutes, up to [the end of the Commonwealth]." Foster Watson, *The Beginnings of the Teaching of Modern Subjects in England* (London, 1909), p. 395.

¹² Edward Evans and Thomas French. Wilson was incorporated LL.B. at Cambridge, after which we hear no more of him; Bowyer left Oxford, and we lose track of him entirely.

miscellany, and that the official language of the universities was Latin.

The quality of French written by every degree of skill from that of mature Frenchmen to that of British undergraduates is naturally uneven. In general, however, allowing for frequent printing errors,¹³ these diverse authors wrote fairly simple, idiomatic, and grammatical, if not poetic, French. At worst, the difficulty of using rhyme and meter resulted in the following errors: pronunciation of sounds normally silent in French (Lucas: *charités* spelled to rhyme with *merites*; Brevint: *cadavres* spelled to rhyme with *univers*) and suppression of sounds normally pronounced in French (Holles: *aurions* as two syllables), unnatural elisions (Casaubon: *iam'attendant*) and failure to elide (Holles: *cest Enigme a nous*, scanned as six syllables), faulty sentence structure to effect a rhyme (Holles: *il m'a fait musé*), unidiomatic transliterations (Tully: *il se tourne ronde*), and awkward inversions (Casaubon: *fascher ne devez*; Williamson: *quand soif auras*). Only ignorance or carelessness could account for lapses not affecting rhyme and meter, such as these: substitution of a verb for a noun (Tonstall: *voyager* for *voyage*), metrically or phonetically correct misspellings (Meetkerke: *asse* for *assez*; Seymour: *personè* for *personne*), and many incorrect word divisions, too many to be attributed to the printer's handling of an unfamiliar language (Goad: *del' Angle-terre*; Tonstall: *un Anget 'a porté*). At worst, many of these and other errors occur in the same poem; at best, a poem may be entirely free from them; but the majority of poems contain their share of elementary errors which no skilled versifier could condone.

If the spelling and grammar of the French poems was often weak, their prosody was equally so. Though the poets generally used the common Alexandrine or octosyllabic meters, and though most of them seem to have understood the rules of French metrics, the majority show some metrical errors: failure to count mute syllables where they should be counted or to drop them where they should not, failure to elide, wrong syllabication resulting from mispronunciation (such as division of a diphthong or suppression of a separately pronounced vowel), and, less frequently, unusual position of the caesura in a classical Alexandrine (due, as often as not, to faulty meter). A smaller number of authors scan without error; but an equal number seem not to have understood the French metrical system at all. The poems of Bowyer and Williamson, for example, scan far better by feet than they do by syllables.

In rhyming, the writers of French poems were more successful, undoubtedly because the rules of French rhyme were not so far from those of English. The poems are about half in couplets, half in simple stanza forms which employ several of the more easy interlocking

¹³ Such as many of the misplaced or omitted accent marks (*qualités* for *qualités*), false division of words (*tonheur*, *de monstre*), and the more naïve spelling errors (*oit* for *voit*, *bieu* for *bien*).

rhyme schemes. Most succeed in preserving identity of rhyming sounds, even at the expense of spelling and grammar. Only a few, however, observe the rule peculiar to French verse of making rhyming syllables identical to the eye as well as to the ear, and only about half observe the French rule for alternating masculine and feminine rhymes.

In content and imagery the French poems closely parallel the English occasional verse of the same period. Each subject required conventional ideas and emotions: women must be complimented on their beauty, men on their military prowess; the best-known qualities of the individual must be praised (Elizabeth's learning, Henrietta Maria's courage in the face of danger); if the theme be mourning and if the deceased be young, the poets must say that his death is tragically premature, that he was so wise for his years that the Fates thought him ripe enough for plucking, or that heaven envied the world such a treasure and therefore took him to herself. Indeed the convention was so strong that it would have been considered bad form to make any original observation about the subject or reveal any personal characteristics of the author.

The use of imagery was governed as strictly by tradition. The poets drew their images from the time-honored sources of classical allusion, certain conventional aspects of nature, the Christian religion, and science. For the most part they used this material in brief simple metaphor, simile, and personification. More rarely they used pun, paradox, and extended metaphor or conceit. In a small way the French poems illustrate the change from Elizabethan to Restoration verse. In the earlier part of the period they show imitation of Du Bartas¹⁴ and a fairly strong emphasis on pun, paradox, extended conceits, and sensuous ornament; whereas the poems toward the end of the period show no influence of Du Bartas, fewer and less complex images, and a greater preference for devices of purely rhetorical wit. At all times, however, the imagery in both French and English poetry of the miscellanies is relatively simple compared with that in the main body of English verse—in other words, more cavalier than metaphysical. And though some of the French poems show a tendency toward the metaphysical image, none approach the astringently intellectual style of Donne.

By modern standards few, if any, of these verses would be considered good poetry. The ideas and images are trite, and the total effect is sometimes doggerel, more often artificially strained than really emotional. But remembering that the miscellanies were largely written by men who laid no other claim to the name of poet, and were

¹⁴ Both Edward Evans and Thomas Goad, writing in 1603, hailed Du Bartas as the muse of French poetry. In their use of adjective-noun compounds, especially, their verse reflects their master's style, which, in its conscious effort to enrich the language with new words, parallels a similar tendency in Renaissance English.

written to order, by the uninspiring motive of duty to important strangers, we should not expect passion or inspiration. More important, the ideal poem for such an occasion (as prescribed by convention) consisted in the appropriate traditional ideas, clothed in apt and tested images and expressed in smooth rhyme and meter, so that the total effect would be graceful or urbanely clever. With this standard in mind, we find that a goodly number of these versifiers proved themselves adequate and a few even completely skillful.

Oberlin College

THE THEME OF THE MYSTERIOUS MOTHER

By ALICE STAYERT BRANDENBURG

When Fanny Burney read a copy of Horace Walpole's *The Myste-rious Mother*, which she had borrowed from the queen, she was so much horrified at the subject of the play that she formed an aversion to the author. Walpole, indeed, had expected that the public would disapprove of his tragedy because it concerned incest, and he had allowed Dodsley to publish it only after he had heard that a pirated edition was about to be issued. This delicacy is hard for the modern reader to comprehend when he realizes that the theme of incest or quasi-incest must have been almost as familiar to the eighteenth-century reader as the classic birthmark. Ironically enough, Fanny Burney had used it herself.

Fanny Burney and her friends were particularly embarrassed because they read the play aloud:

Dreadful was the whole! truly dreadful! A story of so much horror, from atrocious and voluntary guilt, never did I hear! Mrs. Smelt and myself heartily regretted that it had come in our way, and mutually agreed that we felt ourselves ill-used in having ever heard it. She protested she would never do herself so much wrong as to acknowledge she had suffered the hearing so wicked a tale, and declared she would drive it from her thoughts as she would the recollection of whatever was most baneful to them.

For myself, I felt a sort of indignant aversion rise fast and warm in my mind, against the wilful author of a story so horrible: all the entertainment and pleasure I had received from Mr. Walpole seemed extinguished by this lecture, which almost made me regard him as the patron of the vices he had been pleased to record.

Mr. de Luc had escaped from the latter part of this hateful tragedy, protesting, afterwards, he saw what was coming, and would not stay to hear it out.

Mr. Smelt confessed with me, it was a lasting disgrace to Mr. Walpole to have chosen such a subject, and thought him deserving even of punishment for such a painting of human wickedness; and the more as the story throughout was forced and improbable.

But the whole of all that could be said on this subject was summed up in one sentence by Mr. Turbulent, which, for its masterly strength and justice, brought to my mind my ever-revered Dr. Johnson. "Mr. Walpole," cried he, "has chosen a plan of which nothing can equal the abomination but the absurdity!"

When I returned it to the Queen, I professed myself earnest in my hopes that she would never deign to cast her eye upon it.¹

¹ *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay (1778-1840)*, ed. Charlotte Barrett, preface and notes by Austin Dobson (London, 1905), III, 120 f. Miss Burney's indignation vanished, however, when she saw Mr. Walpole about six months later. At Mrs. Vesey's she "had the pleasure to meet Mr. Walpole, who had come from Strawberry Hill, purposely; and that, I suppose, made me forget the spleen I had conceived against him upon reading his tragedy, which had been so great as to make me wish never more to behold his face. He was very civil and very entertaining." (*Ibid.*, III, 254.)

Even while he was writing *The Mysterious Mother*, Walpole doubted that it would be well received by the general public. In letters to Mme du Deffand he mentioned the tragedy on which he was working and implied that she would not like it:

Il ne vous plairait pas assurément; il n'y a pas de beaux sentiments. Il n'y a que des passions sans enveloppe, des crimes, des repentirs, et des horreurs. Il y a des hardiesses qui sont à moi, et des scènes très faibles, et très longues qui sont à moi aussi; du gothique que ne comporterait pas votre théâtre, et des illusions qui devraient faire grand effet et qui peut-être n'en feraient aucun.²

Mme du Deffand was very curious about the play and wanted Walpole to translate it for her or let her have it translated for her own use,³ but she did not think that the subject would be suitable on the French stage:

Je vous rends mille grâces de la peine que vous avez prise de me détailler le sujet de votre tragédie, je la crois très intéressante, mais elle ne serait pas propre à notre théâtre.⁴

When Montagu wrote to Walpole that the "boys" had discovered and read *The Mysterious Mother*,⁵ Walpole was disturbed to hear that they had had access to it:

I am sorry those boys got at my tragedy. I beg you would keep it under lock and key; it is not at all food for the public—at least not till I am *food for worms*, good Percy. Nay, it is not an age to encourage anybody, that has the least vanity, to step forth. There is a total extinction of all taste: our authors are vulgar, gross, illiberal: the theatre swarms with wretched translations, and ballad operas, and we have nothing new but improving abuse.⁶

In 1768 Walpole had fifty copies of *The Mysterious Mother* printed at Strawberry Hill and sent them to some of his friends.⁷ No public edition was issued until 1781. On April 3, 1781, he wrote to Cole:

My tragedy has wandered into the hands of some banditti booksellers, and I am forced to publish it myself to prevent piracy. All I can do is to condemn it myself, and that I shall.⁸

Walpole declared that he wanted the publication of the play to be as inconspicuous as possible:

In short, my advertisement prevented the spurious editions, and I flatter myself I am forgotten; at least I have gained time, and at worst will publish in July

² Horace Walpole's *Correspondence with Madame du Deffand*, ed. W. S. Lewis and Warren Hunting Smith (New Haven, 1939), II, 40.

³ Horace Walpole's *Correspondence with Madame du Deffand and Made-moiselle Sanadon*, ed. W. S. Lewis and Warren Hunting Smith (New Haven, 1939), III, 299 and 320.

⁴ *Correspondence with Madame du Deffand*, II, 51.

⁵ Horace Walpole's *Correspondence with George Montagu*, ed. W. S. Lewis and Ralph S. Brown, Jr. (New Haven, 1941), II, 297.

⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 298.

⁷ R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Horace Walpole* (New York, 1940), p. 284.

⁸ Horace Walpole's *Correspondence with the Rev. William Cole*, ed. W. S. Lewis and A. Dayle Wallace (New Haven, 1937), II, 270.

or August, when all the world is dispersed, and I can trust the fickleness of the age for not recollecting in winter what passed after the prodigious interval of three months.⁹

Not all the readers of *The Mysterious Mother* found it objectionable. Gray and Chute approved of the subject,¹⁰ and Montagu's "boys" enjoyed the play so much that they memorized some of the lines.¹¹ Lady Diana Beauclerk made a series of seven drawings illustrating the play, and these drawings were hung in the hexagonal closet of the Beauclerk Tower at Strawberry Hill.¹² Actually, Lady Diana's approval of the tragedy is scarcely proof of anything; the fact that Lord Bolingbroke had divorced her because of her affair with Topham Beauclerk suggests that her attitude toward life was not conventional.¹³

If Walpole was doubtful about the reception which the reading public would give his play, he was even more hesitant about letting it be presented on the stage, although the idea of having it produced obviously attracted him. When Mason made alterations in *The Mysterious Mother* to adapt it to the theater, Walpole wrote a letter of thanks but declared, "I cannot think of the stage."¹⁴ Walpole implied in 1778 that his tragedy could not be produced because of the current absence of taste and intelligence in England;¹⁵ yet, on the other hand, he composed "an epilogue in character for the Clive, which she would speak admirably—but I am not so sure that she would like to speak it."¹⁶ In his postscript to *The Mysterious Mother* he declared that a Greek poet would not have hesitated to use the subject, though in a way it is more horrible than the story of *Œdipus*:

Revolting as it is, a son assassinating his mother, as Orestes does, exceeds the guilt that appears in the foregoing scenes. . . . There is no age, but has suffered such guilt [parricide] to be represented on the stage; and yet I feel the disgust that must arise at the catastrophe of this piece; so much is our delicacy more apt to be shocked than our good nature.¹⁷

The introduction to the Dublin edition of *The Mysterious Mother*, published in 1791, combined a defense of Walpole's play with an admission that it would not be acceptable on the stage at that time, though in former days many similar dramas had been produced.¹⁸

⁹ *Letters of Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Orford*, ed. Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford, 1904), XI, 454. See also XI, 439 f. and 429.

¹⁰ *Correspondence with Montagu*, II, 259 f.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, 297.

¹² Ketton-Cremer, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

¹⁴ *Letters*, ed. Toynbee, VII, 278.

¹⁵ Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto and The Mysterious Mother*, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1924), p. xlv.

¹⁶ *Correspondence with Montagu*, II, 260.

¹⁷ *The Castle of Otranto and The Mysterious Mother*, ed. Summers, p. 254.

¹⁸ "That the production of such a tragedy as the present, on the modern stage, would be extremely hazardous, we are ready to admit; but we cannot but observe at the same time, that the delicacy of the present times is frequently

But, though *The Mysterious Mother* was not presented in the theater, it would seem that the reputation of Walpole's play was exploited by Robert Jephson in *The Count of Narbonne*, a dramatization of *The Castle of Otranto*. The fact that the names of the characters of the play came from Walpole's tragedy rather than from his novel has been pointed out by Martin Severin Peterson.¹⁹ The very title of Jephson's play suggests a derivation from *The Mysterious Mother*, in which the chief characters are the Countess of Narbonne and her son. Dodsley's edition of Walpole's play appeared in 1781, and *The Count of Narbonne* was presented, very successfully, at Covent Garden on Saturday, November 17, 1781.²⁰ Many persons must have read or heard of *The Mysterious Mother*; Fanny Burney's own comments reveal that she and others were eager to read it:

The Queen, in looking over some books while I was in waiting one morning, met with *The Mysterious Mother*, Mr. Walpole's tragedy, which he printed at Strawberry Hill, and gave to a few friends but has never suffered to be published. I expressed, by looks, I suppose, my wishes, for she most graciously offered to lend it to me. I had long desired to read it, from so well knowing and so much liking the author; and he had promised me, if I would come a second time to Strawberry Hill, that I should have it. Excursions of that sort being now totally over for me, I was particularly glad of this only chance for gratifying my curiosity.

I had had it in my possession some days without reading it. I had named it to Mr. and Mrs. Smelt, and they were eager to see it: the loan, however, being private, and the book having been lent to Her Majesty by Lord Harcourt, I knew not under what restrictions, I could not produce it without leave: this morning I asked and obtained it; and promised it should be forthcoming.²¹

What was Jephson's purpose in suggesting a nonexistent relationship between the two plays if not to make potential audiences believe that they would see a stage version of Walpole's tragedy?

The frequent use of incest as a theme during the eighteenth cen-

carried to a ridiculous degree of affectation. Vices of greater magnitude are daily represented, and without exciting the smallest disgust in the spectator. We are by no means convinced that any consequences, unfavourable to the interests of society, could arise from the representation of the result of crimes even so shocking as those which are the basis of the present play, especially when they are painted in such colours as those in which Mr. Walpole's canvas exhibits them. It is certain, that writers of the last century would not have avoided the story for any of the reasons for which the present author has condemned his piece to oblivion; nor do we apprehend that a play, written with the pathos and energy of the present, would have then been refused by managers, or neglected by the town." (*The Mysterious Mother* [Dublin, 1791], p. viii f.)

¹⁹ Robert Jephson (1736-1803): *A Study of His Life and Works*, University of Nebraska Studies in Language, Literature, and Criticism (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1930), p. 35.

²⁰ *The Castle of Otranto and The Mysterious Mother*, ed. Summers, p. xxxvii.

²¹ *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arbly*, III, 119 f. The passage quoted reveals the incorrectness of a statement in Ernest A. Baker's *History of the English Novel: V, Novel of Sentiment and the Gothic Romance* (London, 1934), p. 179: "He [Walpole] had not yet written his tragedy *The Mysterious Mother*, which was to outdo *Baculard* again in sheer horror, and to disgust Fanny Burney, who went to Strawberry Hill on purpose to borrow it."

tury is, for several reasons, not immediately apparent to the modern reader. First, incest was defined more broadly in the eighteenth than in the twentieth century. Second, the theme was rarely used in a straightforward way, but was instead suggested. Frequently an apparently incestuous attraction was introduced into the plot and then made respectable by the disclosure that the lovers were not brother and sister as they had supposed.

To the readers of the period, incest was among the most horrifying of sins, and writers of all periods have found shocking their public a remunerative business. That incest fascinated the public is indicated by the amount of gossip on the subject. Otto Rank mentions a number of cases of alleged incest.²² Walpole wrote to Gray in January, 1766, of a Parisian scandal involving the Duke of Choiseul, whose wife he described thus:

Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Every body loves it, but its husband, who prefers his own sister the duchesse de Grammont, an amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him—But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.²³

The truth or falsity of such stories is less important than the fact that they indicate the morbid interest current at the time.

At the same time, there was a tendency among philosophers to justify incestuous relationships:

Nicolardot sagt, man müsse den Inzest "le péché philosophique" nennen, da die Philosophen dieser Zeit ihn rechtfertigen. Im Supplement zur Reise des Bougainville erklärt Diderot den Inzest für eine gleichgültige Sache.²⁴

In the anonymous *Love-Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister*, Philander admits that his love for Silvia (who is actually his sister-in-law) is "criminal," though he says that custom, not natural law, forbids incest, and he cites examples of "the first race of men" who had no such scruples.²⁵

To the modern, especially the American, reader, incest is limited to blood relations and does not extend to in-laws. Even in recent times, however, an Englishman was not allowed to marry the sister of his deceased wife. This prohibition was a survival of the Roman Catholic canon law, which still places a special ban on sexual relations with the kin of one's wife or husband.²⁶ In Dryden's *Aureng-*

²² *Das Inzest-Motiv in Dichtung und Sage* (Leipzig und Wien, 1912), pp. 434-37.

²³ *Correspondence of Thomas Gray*, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley (Oxford, 1935), III, 916.

²⁴ Rank, *op. cit.*, p. 434.

²⁵ Pp. 4 ff. Published in London in 1684.

²⁶ J. Dover Wilson has pointed out that the modern reader's lack of understanding of the Elizabethan definition of incest has brought about much mis-

Zebe, the seventeenth-century interpretation is revealed; Nourmahal's love for her stepson is regarded as incestuous both by herself and by others. Mellefont, in Congreve's *The Double Dealer*, is pursued by Lady Touchwood, his uncle's wife. When Lady Touchwood, in the manner of Potiphar's wife, accuses Mellefont, her husband roars:

Unnatural villain! Death, I'll have him stripped and turned naked out of my doors this moment, and let him rot and perish, incestuous brute!²⁷

Another complication in the same play reveals the same attitude. Sir Paul Plyant is made to believe that his wife, not his daughter Cynthia, is the real object of Mellefont's affections. Lady Plyant is shocked at the idea:

Lady Plyant: . . . O merciful Father! how could you think to reverse nature so,—to make the daughter the means of procuring the mother?

Mellefont: The daughter to procure the mother!

Lady Plyant: Ay, for though I am not Cynthia's own mother, I am her father's wife, and that's near enough to make it incest.²⁸

In the minds of the English authors and readers of the eighteenth century, even betrothal or an unconsummated marriage produced affinity, although according to modern Roman Catholic canon law, "a marriage not consummated does not beget affinity."²⁹ In *The*

interpretation of *Hamlet*. "Mr. T. S. Eliot, for example, has surely overlooked the fact of incest or he could hardly have declared the play 'an artistic failure' on the ground that Hamlet is dominated 'by an emotion . . . which is in excess of the facts as they appear.'" (*What Happens in Hamlet* [New York and Cambridge, England, 1935], p. 43.) Gertrude's sin horrifies Hamlet, "makes life a bestial thing, and even infects his very blood. She has committed incest. Modern readers, living in an age when marriage laws are the subject of free discussion and with a deceased wife's sister act upon the statute-book, can hardly be expected to enter fully into Hamlet's feelings on this matter. Yet no one who reads the first soliloquy in the Second Quarto text, with its illuminating dramatic punctuation, can doubt for one moment that Shakespeare wished here to make full dramatic capital out of Gertrude's infringement of ecclesiastical law, and expected his audience to look upon it with as much abhorrence as the Athenians felt for what we should consider the more venial, because unwitting, crime of the Oedipus of Sophocles." (*Ibid.*, p. 39.) Lord Raglan comments on the confusions in the interpretation of incest: "Dr. Johnson defined it as 'unnatural and criminal conjunctions of persons within degrees prohibited,' which suggests that nature is regulated by Act of Parliament. . . . The Church of England regards as incestuous several types of marriage which are now valid by the law of England, while the latter would regard as incestuous, though not criminally so, a marriage which a Roman Catholic would be bound to regard as valid, that is to say, a marriage between uncle and niece which had been sanctioned by the Pope." (*Jocasta's Crime: An Anthropological Study* [London, 1933], p. 99 f.) The position of the civil courts is revealed by William Blackstone in *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, fourth ed. (Oxford, 1770), I, 433: "The holiness of the matrimonial state is left entirely to the ecclesiastical law: the temporal courts not having jurisdiction to consider unlawful marriage as a sin, but merely as a civil inconvenience. The punishment therefore, or annulling, of incestuous or other unscriptural marriages, is the province of the spiritual courts; which act *pro salute animae*."

²⁷ William Congreve, ed. Alex. Charles Ewald, Mermaid Series (New York, n.d.), p. 134.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²⁹ "Affinity," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, 1907), I, 179.

Orphan, Polydore's sense of guilt is increased by his conviction that he has committed the sin of incest, for Monimia, whom Polydore has seduced through trickery, is the wife of his brother, Castalio, though the marriage has not been consummated.³⁰ A similar situation occurs in *The Castle of Otranto*. Prince Manfred wishes to marry the fiancée of his dead son, hoping to have his marriage to Hippolita dissolved on the grounds that she is related to him "in the fourth degree." He pretends that he is devoted to Hippolita but that their "state of unlawful wedlock" has been punished by the death of their son.³¹ The conversation between Manfred and the friar suggests that Walpole and his characters regard the prince's love for Isabella, the dead son's betrothed, as incestuous:

"Cant not to me," said Manfred, "but return and bring the princess to her duty." "It is my duty to prevent her return hither," said Jerome. "She is where orphans and virgins are safest from the snares and wiles of this world; and nothing but a parent's authority shall take her thence." "I am her parent," cried Manfred, "and demand her." "She wished to have you for her parent," said the friar: "but heaven that forbade that connection, has for ever dissolved all ties betwixt you: and I announce to your highness—" "Stop! audacious man," said Manfred, "and dread my displeasure."³²

If one takes into account only the plays and novels in which incest actually occurs, one receives the somewhat false impression that few major works deal with the subject. Actually, several of the best-known novels of the period suggest the theme in a manner that reminds the modern reader of Hollywood's purity code. The appearance of evil is carefully established and treated as sensationally as possible; yet in the end the respectability of the situation is uncovered when the lovers find that they are not related.

An example of this ambiguous use of incest occurs in *Tom Jones*. Mrs. Waters, according to Partridge, is Tom's mother, and Tom has therefore been guilty of incest. The scene in which Tom learns of his sin is highly emotional; Tom falls "into the most violent and frantic agonies of grief and despair."³³ Not until five chapters later do Tom and the reader find out that Mrs. Waters is not the hero's mother.

³⁰ *Works of Thomas Otway*, ed. J. C. Ghosh (Oxford, 1932), II, 82.

³¹ Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, with introduction by Sir Walter Scott and preface by Caroline Spurgeon (New York, n.d.), p. 57.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 53 ff.

³³ Henry Fielding, *History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, Illustrated Modern Library (1943), p. 821. There is an odd suggestion of the same theme in John Home's tragedy, *Douglas*. Lord Randolph and Glenalvon come upon Lady Randolph and Douglas (alias Norval) embracing in the woods. Douglas is actually Lady Randolph's long-lost son by a former marriage, but Lord Randolph, made jealous by Glenalvon's suggestions, assumes that they are lovers. Since the audience knows that they are mother and son, Randolph's misinterpretation of their affection gives a curious ambiguity to the scene. (*Plays of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dougald MacMillan and Howard Mumford Jones [New York, 1931], p. 669.)

The author achieves a double victory in that the reader has been shocked but decency has been preserved.

Both Henry Fielding and Fanny Burney used the situation of love between a brother and a sister. In *Joseph Andrews* and *Evelina* the story is essentially the same: two young people, after falling in love, are told that they are brother and sister but later discover that there is no kinship between them. Fielding treated the situation lightly:

All the company in the parlour, except the disappointed lovers, who sat sullen and silent, were full of mirth: for Mr. Booby had prevailed on Joseph to ask Mr. Didapper's pardon; with which he was perfectly satisfied. Many jokes passed between the beau and the parson, chiefly on each other's dress; these afforded much diversion to the company. Pamela chid her brother Joseph for the concern which he expressed at discovering a new sister. She said, if he loved Fanny as he ought, with a pure affection, he had no reason to lament being related to her. Upon which Adams began to discourse on Platonic love; whence he made a quick transition to the joys in the next world, and concluded with strongly asserting that there was no such thing as pleasure in this. At which Pamela and her husband smiled on one another.⁸⁴

But the disappointment of Fanny and Joseph, though real, is brief, for the "discovery" scene at the end reveals that two babies have been substituted instead of one.

Fanny Burney handled the complication more seriously in *Evelina*, where it forms an important part of the plot. Mr. Macartney, whom Evelina befriends, is in love with a girl whom he met in Paris. After wounding the girl's father during a quarrel, Macartney learns from his mother that the injured man is his own father. At the Hotwells, Macartney sees Evelina shortly after a meeting with his father and replies to her question about his success:

I then very eagerly enquired if he had seen his father.

"I have, Madam," said he; "and the generous compassion you have shewn made me hasten to acquaint you, that upon reading my unhappy mother's letter, he did not hesitate to acknowledge me."

"Good God," cried I, with no little emotion, "how similar are our circumstances! And did he receive you kindly?"

"I could not, Madam, expect that he would: the cruel transaction which obliged me to fly Paris, was too recent in his memory."

"And,—have you seen the young lady?"

"No, Madam," said he mournfully, "I was forbid her sight."

"Forbid her sight! and why?"

"Partly, perhaps, from prudence,—and partly from the remains of a resentment which will not easily subside. I only requested leave to acquaint her with my relationship, and be allowed to call her sister;—but it was denied me!—*You have no sister*, said Sir John, *you must forget her existence*. Hard, and vain command!"

"You have, you have a sister!" cried I, from an impulse of pity which I could not repress, "a sister who is most warmly interested in your welfare, and who only wants opportunity to manifest her friendship and regard."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, "what does Miss Anville mean?"

⁸⁴ Henry Fielding, *Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, with introduction by Bruce McCullough (New York, 1930), p. 384.

"Anville," said I, "is not my real name; Sir John Belmont is my father,—he is yours,—and I am your sister."³⁵

In this novel, too, the problem is solved by the discovery of a substitution of babies, the so-called Miss Belmont being the daughter of Evelina's old nurse. The episode ends happily with Evelina's achieving her rightful position and Macartney's marrying the nursemaid's daughter when he learns that she is not his half-sister.

Actual incest, as well as the threat of it, was introduced into eighteenth-century plays and novels, often, no doubt, with the intention of shocking the public. Many critics have pointed out that several Jacobean tragedies are precursors of *The Mysterious Mother*, but one scarcely needs to go back so far, for during the Restoration a number of plays dealing with the subject were produced. Dryden and Lee collaborated on *Ædipus*, which was first produced in December, 1678, or January, 1679, and "long remained a stock play."³⁶ Dryden's *Don Sebastian* is unusual in that the tone of the play is dignified and heroic rather than sensational, although in the epilogue there is a cynical comment on the nobility of the unhappy lovers. When Don Sebastian and Almeyda, his wife, find that they are brother and sister, they separate and live as recluses. Aphra Behn's story, *The Dumb Virgin*, deals with parricide and incest discovered after the fact.³⁷ Moll Flanders' realization that she has married her own brother is one of the most dramatic episodes in the novel, and the publisher's mentioning this incident on the title page probably did not decrease the sales of the book.³⁸ An English version of the Abbé Prévost's *Cleveland*, in which a father unwittingly has an affair with his daughter, seems to have been successful.³⁹ Finally, at the end of the eighteenth century, Lewis attained a climax of loathsomeness with his treatment of incestuous rape in *The Monk*.⁴⁰

Why, then, was Walpole so dubious about the success of his play, if the subject was not uncommon during the period? Apparently the chief objection was that the Countess of Narbonne's sin was committed deliberately.⁴¹ *The Fatal Discovery*, presented at Drury Lane in 1698, treated the same subject, except that in the older play the crime is unintentional.⁴² On the other hand, Robert Gould's tragedy,

³⁵ Frances Burney, *Evelina: or The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, ed. Sir Frank D. Mackinnon (Oxford, 1930), pp. 454 ff.

³⁶ John Dryden, *Dramatic Works*, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1932), IV, 346.

³⁷ *Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Montague Summers (London and Stratford-on-Avon, 1915), V, 415-45.

³⁸ G. A. Aitken, "Introduction," *Moll Flanders*, Everyman edition (n.d.), p. vii.

³⁹ [Antoine-François Prévost d'Exiles], *Life and Entertaining Adventures of Mr. Cleveland, Natural Son of Oliver Cromwell, Written by Himself*, originally printed in 5 volumes, the second edition in 3 volumes (London, 1741).

⁴⁰ M. G. Lewis, *The Monk* (London [1800]), II, 213.

⁴¹ Stephen Gwynn is incorrect in his statement that *The Mysterious Mother* concerns "involuntary incest." (*Life of Horace Walpole* [London, 1932], p. 239.)

⁴² [Horace Walpole], *The Mysterious Mother* (Dublin, 1791), p. x, and

Innocence Distress'd: or, The Royal Penitents, resembles *The Mysterious Mother* very closely, except that the earlier play concludes with the mother's poisoning herself and her children; in both, the mother's sin is premeditated. Gould's play, however, was not acted.⁴³ Mason's alterations, intended to make Walpole's tragedy suitable for the theater, made the Countess guilty only of jealousy, for she thinks she is taking the place of her husband's mistress. But, although Walpole expressed his gratitude to Mason, he managed, very diplomatically, to avoid having the changes appear in the Dodsley edition:

I have found your emendations of *The Mysterious Mother*; but as to inserting them in the text, it is now impossible, for the whole impression was printed off in a week after it was delivered to Dodsley. . . .⁴⁴

Walpole may have felt that, although his play should not be produced as it was, a bowdlerized version would distort his artistic purpose. If the Countess were not guilty of premeditated crime, she would be guilty of no crime at all; she would be not a tragic heroine but a victim of circumstances. When one reads *The Mysterious Mother*, one feels that the author's intention was to compose a tragedy rather than a melodrama. Paul Yvon has pointed out that Walpole was interested in analyzing a character, in portraying remorse, and that he may have been influenced by the representation of feminine guilt and repentance in Racine's *Phèdre*, Rowe's *The Fair Penitent*, and Ambrose Philips' *The Distressed Mother*.⁴⁵ In a letter to Jephson, Walpole remarked that he thought *Phèdre* "exquisite" and expressed his admiration for Rowe's play.⁴⁶ As Yvon remarks, the whole tone of Walpole's drama is more classical than Gothic:

Cette pièce, l'auteur était assez disposé à réclamer pour elle, le titre de (classique), quoiqu'il n'y eût pas tout d'abord songé, disait-il. Le fait est que, construite sur les données qui rappellent curieusement celles des tragédies de Voltaire, elle n'est gothique que par certains côtés.⁴⁷

In his "Postscript" Walpole declared that one of his reasons for choosing the subject was that "it was capable of furnishing not only a contrast of characters, but a contrast of virtue and vice in the same character."⁴⁸ Indeed, the Countess of Narbonne appears in the play as a woman of lofty principles who, though haunted by a sense of guilt, devotes her life to good works and rejects the absolution that she could secure by confessing her sin. Benedict, the friar, believes that she is heretical and tries to discover her secret. Walpole remarked that some of his friends considered his central character too rational

Allardyce Nicoll, *History of Restoration Drama* (Cambridge, England, 1923), p. 24.

⁴³ Published in London in 1737.

⁴⁴ *Letters*, ed. Toynbee, XII, 18.

⁴⁵ *Horace Walpole as a Poet* (Paris, 1924), pp. 174 ff.

⁴⁶ *Supplement to the Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. Paget Toynbee (Oxford, 1918), I, 255.

⁴⁷ *Horace Walpole: la vie d'un dilettante* (Paris et Londres, 1924), p. 642.

⁴⁸ *The Castle of Otranto and The Mysterious Mother*, ed. Summers, p. 253.

to exist in a period of superstition, but in his defense he reminded the reader that the setting is "at the dawn of the reformation, consequently the strength of mind in the Countess may be supposed to have been borrowed from other sources, besides those she found in her own understanding."⁴⁹ Indeed, in her attitude toward religion the Countess seems to be a product of the Enlightenment rather than of the Reformation. In the frivolous epilogue, Walpole commented humorously on his own creation:

So very guilty, and so very good,
An angel, with such errant flesh and blood!
Such sinning, praying, preaching—I'll be kist,
If I don't think she was a methodist!⁵⁰

In conclusion, one feels that, in hesitating to have his tragedy offered to the general public either in print or on the stage, Walpole was sensitive to the prejudices of his own time. The readers and theatergoers of the eighteenth century enjoyed being shocked by a meretricious exploitation of unnatural love if the sin was committed accidentally or was merely imminent, as in *Joseph Andrews*, but they were offended, without being pleased, by an honest approach to the subject. Vestiges of this tendency still exist. Certain abnormalities are acceptable as a source of humor in musical comedies but bring adverse criticism when discussed seriously; in 1945, for example, Dorothy Baker's *Trio*, a play dealing with homosexuality, was closed by the New York License Commissioner.⁵¹ But in recent years psychologists and novelists have felt free to investigate the minds of characters like Walpole's Countess of Narbonne, and the tragedy that disgusted Fanny Burney no longer scandalizes the modern reader. Although no one would call *The Mysterious Mother* a great drama, critics of the past and present have been at fault in reviling it because of the theme. A few have judged it on other grounds; Scott, for example, admitted that it was "horribly impressive" as well as "disgusting"⁵² and commented on Walpole's "dramatic talent which afterwards was so conspicuous in *The Mysterious Mother*."⁵³ Whatever defects one may find in the play, one has the impression that Walpole was attempting to treat incest as a tragic subject and not merely as a device for achieving a cheap sensationalism.

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⁴⁹ *The Castle of Otranto and The Mysterious Mother*, ed. Summers, p. 257.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁵¹ *Trio* "ran fitfully for sixty-odd performances before New York's License Commissioner took cognizance of the protests of church folk and associate moralists. Then the Commissioner refused the Belasco Theatre a renewal of its license until the offending play was withdrawn. There were a few court skirmishes but the morality forces finally won." (*Best Plays of 1944-45 and the Year Book of the Drama in America*, ed. Burns Mantle [New York, 1945], p. 9.) *Trio* was one of the plays mentioned for the New York Drama Critics' Circle prize. (*Ibid.*, p. 449.)

⁵² Sir Walter Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, Everyman's Library (New York and London, n.d.), p. 195.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

A LITERARY LIFE OF JOHN BRAHAM

By JOSEPH SLATER

On May 11, 1833, on the front page of *The National Standard*, a sober twopenny weekly devoted to Literature, Science, Music, Theatricals, and the Fine Arts, there appeared a caricature of the famous tenor Mister John Braham. He was wearing his familiar sailor's costume and had struck a familiar operatic pose. In the background there was an old-clothes peddler with three hats on his head. In the heavens there was a garlanded jew's-harp. And beneath there was this poem by W. Wordsworth, called simply "Sonnet":

Say not that Judah's harp hath lost its tone,
Or that no bard hath found it where it hung,
Broken and lonely, voiceless and unstrung,
Beside the sluggish stream of Babylon;
Sloman!* repeats the strain his fathers sung,
And Judah's burning lyre is Braham's own!
Behold him here. Here view the wondrous man,
Majestical and lovely as when first
In music on a wondering world he burst,
And charmed the ravished ears of sov'reign Anne!**
Mark well the form, O! reader, nor deride
The sacred symbol—Jew's-harp glorified—
Which circled with a blooming wreath is seen
Of verdant bays; and thus are typified
The pleasant music and the baize of green,
Whence issues out at eve, Braham with front serene!

*It is needless to speak of this eminent vocalist and improvisatore. He nightly delights a numerous and respectable audience at the Cider-cellar; and while on this subject, I cannot refrain from mentioning the kindness of Mr. Evans, the worthy proprietor of that establishment. N.B. A table d'hôte every Friday.—W. Wordsworth.

**Mr. Braham made his first appearance in England in the reign of Queen Anne.—W.W.

Readers of *The National Standard* must have been less surprised by the poem's curious form than by its gaiety and deftness and its familiarity with people and places far from Grasmere. Braham, of course, was known to everyone and was especially celebrated for his singing of sacred music. But Charles Sloman was a much less eminent vocalist and celebrated not for Handel but for comic songs and compositions of his own like "Daughters of Salem" and "Maid of Judah."¹ Nor was the company at the Cider-cellar quite as respectable as Wordsworth was accustomed to keep. In Mr. Pickwick's day that

¹ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, article on Sloman.

tavern at 20 Maiden Lane had been the scene of frequent and majestic dissipations by salaried law clerks.² And according to Peter Cunningham it had been

a favorite haunt of Professor Porson, still frequented by young men, and much in vogue for devilled kidneys, oysters, and welsh rarebits, cigars, glasses of brandy, and great supplies of London stout.³

This was suitable ground for Professor Porson, or for Mr. Sheridan, but it was hardly the place one would have expected to encounter Daddy Wordsworth.

And yet two years before, in the spring of 1831, Wordsworth had been down to London and had by his own admission "mixed a good deal with the Radicals,"⁴ which implies perhaps some weakening of moral fiber and surely social influences of a questionable sort. What is more, he had been a guest at the suburban house of Charles Lamb, who had for years been fond of both brandy and Braham.⁵ It is not impossible that Lamb took "the elderly gentleman" (as his landlady described Wordsworth) into London to hear Braham sing "The Death of Nelson" and then to the Cider-cellar for devilled kidneys and stout. On such a night even Wordsworth might have written, perhaps on the back of an opera bill, a playful sonnet with two extra lines and two puns.

Unfortunately for his biographers there is no evidence that his excesses on that spring visit amounted to more than a heavy consumption of sugar in his tea, for which the landlady charged Lamb six shillings extra;⁶ there is very good evidence that the sonnet was the work of another famous but rather more likely hand. The same issue of *The National Standard* in which "Mr. Braham" appeared carried an announcement that the magazine was under new management and editorship. The new editor, although his name was not given, was young William Makepeace Thackeray, and both the poem and the drawing are presumably his. They were attributed to him, at any rate, in a biographical article written by his friend Dr. John Brown the year after his death⁷ and have since appeared in various editions of his work. Even without this testimony he would be a convincing choice. His letters show him fifteen years later still a member of the Cellar's numerous and respectable audience. "I have been to the Cyder Cellars since again," he wrote to a friend, "to hear the man sing about going to be hanged. I have had a headache afterwards."⁸ In 1850 he wrote nostalgically, "My dear old Fitz and I,

² *Pickwick Papers*, Chap. XXXI.

³ Peter Cunningham, *Handbook of London, Past and Present* (London, 1850), p. 308.

⁴ E. de Selincourt, ed., *Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth* (Oxford, 1939), II, 609.

⁵ E. V. Lucas, *Life of Charles Lamb* (New York, 1905), II, 328.

⁶ *Idem*.

⁷ "Thackeray," *North British Review*, XL (1864), 210-65.

⁸ Gordon N. Ray, ed., *Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray* (Cambridge, Mass., 1945), II, 442.

how we used to go and see Braham and watch him with unwearied happiness twenty years ago."⁹ And he made fictional use of both singer and tavern in the first chapter of *The Newcomes*. The poem itself, part parody and part hoax, was in a manner that he was later to use again and again, although never with such charming impudence. It seems to have brought no angry letter from Rydal Mount; probably it never reached that distant house. *The National Standard* had a small circulation and a short life, and Wordsworth was no great reader of twopenny papers.

But unproductive as the sonnet to Mr. Braham may be of New Light on the Later Wordsworth, it can be made to serve a more modest literary purpose. Its baize of green is a suitable backdrop for the introduction of John Braham, the English tenor who was talked of for forty years as the greatest singer in Europe and who was heard by and known by an impressive number of men of letters. Today, in spite of the six columns which his concerts and compositions earned him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, he must always be identified in appositives as "the famous tenor." But in *Oxberry's Dramatic Biography* there is a "Theatrical Alphabet" for the year 1816 in which K stands for Kemble and Kean,

And B denotes Braham, the sweet little vocalist,
Born to delight and astonish the age.¹⁰

Theatrical alphabets are ephemeral things, but this one, at least under B and K, could have been written in almost any year from 1800 to 1850. Its perennial vocalist Braham deserves, for the richness of his long career and for its frequent intersections with the course of nineteenth-century literature, a permanent place beside Kemble and Kean in the literary *mise-en-scène*.

His debut was not, as a matter of fact, made during the reign of Queen Anne, but to a young man looking backward from 1833 it must have seemed remote enough. The play bill of Covent Garden for April 21, 1787, announced as an added attraction between the acts of Sheridan's *Dianna* the "first appearance on any stage" of Master Braham, who was to sing Dr. Arne's enormously difficult "Soldier Tired of War's Alarms." Master Braham had been until that evening John Abraham, a London orphan, a protégé and nephew of Meier Leon (who became Signior Leoni when he sang opera), and a choir boy at the Great Synagogue.¹¹

⁹ Ray, *op. cit.*, II, 703.

¹⁰ William Oxberry, *Oxberry's Dramatic Biography* (London, 1825-1826), V, 65.

¹¹ Details about Braham's boyhood in this and the following paragraph are drawn from these sources: *Dictionary of National Biography*; A. Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music* (New York, 1929), p. 220 f.; Oxberry, *op. cit.*, III, 156; *The Report of the Trial, Wright vs. Braham* (London, 1816). Hereafter, facts taken from the *DNB* article on Braham will not be specifically acknowledged.

He was born in 1777¹² in the slum called Goodman's Fields, the son of a recent immigrant from Prosnitz, Moravia, a chazzan of some distinction who was known by the occupational name of Abraham Singer. At the age of six or seven John Abraham was an orphan, selling pencils in Houndsditch and Petticoat Lane and hanging about the bookstore of Alexander Cleugh, in whose "back room," as an early biographer tells, "surrounded by old books and cheered by refreshing potations of hot coffee, he received lessons in singing."¹³ He is said to have shown the conventional inclination towards the art of Mendoza, but his prodigious musical gifts brought him quickly under the tutelage of that other hero of Jewish youth, Signior Leoni, and he was trained from early boyhood in the baroque vocal style of the eighteenth-century synagogue.

After the Covent Garden debut he had a considerable success as a child prodigy: a portrait of him survives, dressed in the sort of Blue Boy costume which he wore when he sang the Arne showpiece.¹⁴ But his voice changed, and his uncle emigrated to Jamaica, and he was obliged to support himself for a while by teaching the pianoforte. When his voice returned at sixteen, he was sent by the Goldsmid family, the bankers of the Napoleonic wars, to Bath to study with the Italian master Venanzio Rauzzini, who was director of music at the Assembly Rooms.¹⁵ There for three years as Rauzzini's "favorite scholar"¹⁶ he learned the new Italian vocal style, appeared in concert with Madame Mara,¹⁷ and gave instruction himself to Mrs. Nelson, whose husband, the captain of the *Agamemnon*, had learned to like Italian songs.¹⁸ In 1796 Braham was heard by J. P. Salomon, for

¹² There is some disagreement about the date of Braham's birth. Oxberry said 1772; the *Gentleman's Magazine* obituary, Vol. 199 (May, 1856), p. 541, said 1774; the *DNB* accepts 1774 with a question mark; and *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* gives 1777. Braham himself wrote to the *Birmingham Advertiser* in 1840 to deny the rumor that he was an octogenarian and to state that he was born March 20, 1777 (see *The Times*, March 28, 1843, p. 6). An aging tenor is hardly to be trusted for the date of his birth, but Braham's statement agrees so well with the generally accepted dates for the adolescent failure of his voice (1789) and the resumption of his studies under Rauzzini (1793) that it must be taken as accurate.

¹³ An Eminent Short Hand Writer, *The Report of the Trial, Wright vs. Braham*.

¹⁴ Reproduced as the frontispiece of *The Singing of John Braham*, by John Mewburn Leven (London, 1945).

¹⁵ *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, article on Rauzzini.

¹⁶ Michael Kelly, *Reminiscences* (London, 1826), II, 107.

¹⁷ C. F. Pohl, *Mozart und Haydn in London* (Wien, 1867), II, 274.

¹⁸ "John Braham," *Dwight's Journal of Music*, XXXI, No. 22 (January 27, 1872), p. 171, reprinted from *London Musical World* (1854). Perhaps Mrs. Nelson arranged a meeting between her husband and her young teacher. A few years later, at any rate, Braham was a frequent guest at the Admiral's residence in Leghorn, where after dinner he would sing duets with the Admiral's friend Lady Hamilton (*ibid.*, p. 172). These dinners and duets were continued back in England when Lady Hamilton was mistress at Merton Place (Carola Oman, *Nelson* [New York, 1946], p. 502), and many years after Trafalgar she would appear at Braham's concerts to swoon publicly, as the cynics said, when he sang his celebrated composition "The Death of Nelson" (*ibid.*, p. 668).

whom in recent years Haydn had written and conducted the twelve London Symphonies, and was engaged by him for the famous subscription concerts in Hanover Square.¹⁹

That same year, at the age of nineteen, he made his first operatic appearance in Stephen Storace's *Mahmoud*, which was less important as a debut than as an introduction to another member of the cast, the composer's sister Nancy,²⁰ with whom Braham soon formed what a pamphlet of the time called "an intimacy . . . of the tenderest kind."²¹ Nancy Storace was eleven years older than Braham and a prima donna of European reputation. She had been married in Vienna to a violinist named Fisher but had separated from him, it was said, at the particular desire of the Emperor Joseph.²² It was especially for her that Mozart had written the part of Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*.²³ Braham's intimacy with her was not only tender but surprisingly long-lived: they did not separate until 1815. In 1797 they went abroad together, gave a series of concerts in Paris under the patronage of Josephine Beauharnais, traveled and sang for four years in Austria and Italy, and had an opera written for them by Cimarosa.

When Braham appeared again at Covent Garden late in 1801, he was an experienced musician and a fully matured artist. He had developed during his years abroad the mastery of bravura technique, the minute dynamic control, the tremendous volume, and the almost unprecedented range (nineteen notes plus an undetectable falsetto from *d* to *a*) which were to dazzle audiences and critics for the next forty years. From this time on the musicologist finds his name perhaps oftener than that of any other performer among memoirs of music and the theater, in announcements of concerts and oratorios, and in the casts of forgotten operas.

Besides the greatness of his artistry and the glitter of his virtuosity, Braham had a tenor's flamboyance and the pepperiness of a five-foot-three Cockney who had wanted to be a prizefighter:²⁴ altogether he made a very satisfactory public figure. Young men wrote to their friends about him and set down strong opinions. "Do you like Braham's singing?" Charles Lamb asked his friend Manning in 1808.

The little Jew has bewitched me. I follow him like as the boys followed Tom the Piper. . . . Braham's singing, when it is impassioned, is finer than Mrs. Siddons's or Mr. Kemble's acting. . . . The brave little Jew!²⁵

Three years later he took another friend, Henry Crabb Robinson, to hear *The Siege of Belgrade*, and that night Robinson wrote in his journal:

¹⁹ *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, article on Salomon.

²⁰ Pohl, *op. cit.*, II, 354.

²¹ *Report of the Trial*, p. 9.

²² Oxberry, *op. cit.*, III, 150.

²³ Otto Jahn, *Life of Mozart* (London, 1891), II, 330.

²⁴ Oxberry, *op. cit.*, III, 146 and 159.

²⁵ E. V. Lucas, ed., *Letters of Charles Lamb* (New Haven, 1935), II, 49.

Braham's singing delighted me. His trills, shakes, and quavers are, like those of all other great singers, tiresome to me; but his pure melody, the simple song clearly articulated, is equal to anything I ever heard. His song was *acted* as well as sung delightfully. Indeed I think Braham a fine actor while singing; he throws his soul into his throat, but his whole frame is awakened, and his gestures and looks are equally impassioned.²⁶

Braham was often the subject of controversy: his trills, shakes, and quavers were not highly valued in an age which talked of music as the language of the heart, and there were many who thought his acting excessively impassioned. But of his essential greatness and his pre-eminence as a virtuoso there was never any question.

Poets and composers sent songs to him, confident that anything which Braham sang would soon be known in every concert hall and drawing-room in the land. Thomas Moore wrote a song for him in 1810, one of the *Irish Melodies* in 1812, and some of the Ballads in 1814.²⁷ The verses beginning "Has sorrow thy young days shaded?" which appeared in the sixth number of the *Irish Melodies* Moore sent to his publisher, James Power, with these instructions:

I send you the song for Braham in this parcel. I feel almost sure he will like it. You had better take my copy to him and tell him that what I have put as bass now must be turned into accompaniment. He may alter as he likes, and, as soon as I know he approves of it, you shall have the second verse, which I will make applicable to any purpose he may wish it for.²⁸

In 1811 Moore's comic opera *M. P., or The Bluestocking* had been produced with only a modest success despite an excellent cast²⁹ which was strengthened by the addition of Braham for the performances in Bath.³⁰ Eventually Moore was to discard *M. P.* and abandon his operatic ambitions, but for some time they were alive in his mind, and Braham was associated with them as either performer or composer. In 1813 he wrote Power that he was meditating an opera or "rather a Drama with songs" and that he would like to have Braham do the music. "We can easily manage it between us,"³¹ he wrote; but they did not. Six years later they met between the acts at the Philharmonic. Braham took Moore aside and told him about "some fantasies, or wild melodies" he had composed; he suggested that Moore write operatic scenes for them and that they publish them together. But the two men were under contract to different publish-

²⁶ Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, ed. Thomas Sadler (Boston, 1869), I, 208-09.

²⁷ *Notes from the Letters of Thomas Moore to his Music Publisher, James Power* (New York, 1854), pp. 4, 39.

²⁸ Lord John Russell, ed., *Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore* (London, 1853), I, 298.

²⁹ Howard Mumford Jones, *The Harp that Once—A Chronicle of the Life of Thomas Moore* (New York, 1937), p. 131 f.

³⁰ Russell, *op. cit.*, I, 262.

³¹ *Letters . . . to . . . Power*, p. 19.

ers, and Moore had by this time almost succeeded in forgetting the sour grapes of opera.⁸²

Shortly after the publication of *The Lady of the Lake* a composer named James Clarke-Whitfield wrote Walter Scott that he had set to music all the songs in "that delicious poem" and had been negotiating with Braham to have them publicly performed but that he found it hard to draw from him any definite commitment. Scott replied sympathetically: "I regret that Braham should be so capricious, but his talent is unique & that naturally inspires conceit."⁸³ Whether the great tenor ever sang "Hail to the Chief Who in Triumph Advances" Scott's correspondence does not show. It was the sort of thing he did well. But we know that he was highly pleased with Clarke-Whitfield's setting of "The Cavalier" from *Rokeby* and sang it with such fervor that a Whig audience, offended at lines like "round-headed rebels of Westminster Hall" and "bold traitors of London's proud town," booed him into silence.⁸⁴ Such hostility from the crowd, however, was as exceptional for Braham as it was for Scott.

In 1813 another composer, a young Jewish musician named Isaac Nathan, inspired by the success of Moore's *Irish Melodies*, took down certain hymns and chants which were then in use in the religious services of his people. He wrote to Scott, proposing a collaboration of the sort which had been so profitable for Moore and Stevenson, but Scott replied that the distance between them was too great and that the task was not congenial to his talents. Then with some trepidation, knowing that the noble lord "wrote only for amusement and . . . Fame," Nathan asked permission to play the melodies for Byron in the hope that from their great beauty he "would become interested in them."⁸⁵ Byron did become interested, and the result was the book of songs called *Hebrew Melodies*.

Like Clarke-Whitfield, Nathan felt that "the first poet of the age" should have "his verses sung by the greatest vocalist of the day," and he was accordingly delighted when Braham offered to sing them in public in exchange for an equal share of the honors and profits of publication.⁸⁶ The title page of the first edition thus carries the names of both "I. Braham and I. Nathan," and Nathan turned over to Braham his "moiety" of the book's £5,000 earnings,⁸⁷ of which Byron, of course, would take no part. According to the original agreement Braham's contribution was to include some assistance

⁸² Russell, *op. cit.*, II, 324-25.

⁸³ H. J. C. Grierson, ed., *Letters of Sir Walter Scott* (London, 1932), II, 488.

⁸⁴ Wilfred Partington, ed., *Sir Walter's Post Bag* (London, 1932), pp. 97-98. Partington says the "Cavalier" episode is "the only demonstration against Scott that I have met with."

⁸⁵ Olga Somech Phillips, *Isaac Nathan, Friend of Byron* (London, 1940), p. 38 f. Mrs. Phillips prints two letters from Nathan to Byron, hitherto unpublished and in the possession of Sir John Murray, which describe the overture to Scott. Partington, *op. cit.*, lists Nathan as one of Scott's correspondents in 1815.

⁸⁶ I. Nathan, *Fugitive Pieces* (London, 1829), p. viii.

⁸⁷ *Idem*, and Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

with the arranging of the melodies.³⁸ Byron wrote to Moore on February 22, 1815: "Braham is to assist—or hath assisted . . .";³⁹ and the reviewer for *Gentleman's Magazine* saw evidence of Braham's well-known hand in some of the "tasteful decoration."⁴⁰ But the musical credit for the *Hebrew Melodies*—and it is not inconsiderable—must go almost entirely to Nathan. Braham was, to be sure, a prolific and prosperous composer, but critics, even of his own day, agree that his songs are of but the slightest value, memorable only as the springboards from which he soared into his improvised arabesques and cadenzas. Nathan's subsequent and lengthy accounts of the production of the book give no part to Braham in the selection and arrangement of the melodies or in the composition of the symphonies and accompaniments, and later editions read simply "Music by I. Nathan." It is probable that Braham assisted only as expert and sponsor and that some of the more florid passages were framed for his voice.

The partnership with Lord Byron was the dominant experience of Isaac Nathan's life. For fifty years he remained "Lord Byron's protegee and friend";⁴¹ his house in Sidney, Australia, he called Byron Lodge,⁴² and he saved and published a note of thanks from Byron for a gift of "motsas" on the day before the famous exile began.⁴³ Byron indeed seems to have had a good deal of affection for Nathan and to have treated him always with warmth and graciousness, but in the years of exile it was not Nathan whom he remembered. "In his wine," wrote Leigh Hunt, "he would volunteer an imitation of somebody . . . he would pleasantly pretend that Braham called 'enthusiasm' *entoosymoosy*," a pronunciation which Hunt thought hit off admirably the "lightness, haste, indifference and fervour" of Braham's stage delivery.⁴⁴ Byron himself liked the jest so well that "enthusiasm" was replaced in his letters by "what Mr. Braham calls *entusymusy*" and "*entusymusy* (you remember Braham)," repeatedly, from Ravenna, Bologna, Metaxata, and even Missolonghi.⁴⁵ But association with the first poet of the age seems to have left no deep mark on Braham: tenors are not the stuff of which hero-worshippers are made. He did not, like Nathan, stand faithfully by during Byron's last few days at Piccadilly Terrace: he was having domestic difficulties of his own.

³⁸ Nathan, *op. cit.*, p. viii.

³⁹ R. E. Prothero, ed., *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron* (London, 1899), III, 180.

⁴⁰ Vol. 85, Pt. I (June, 1815), p. 539.

⁴¹ Charles H. Bertie, *Isaac Nathan, Australia's First Composer* (Sidney, 1922), p. 17.

⁴² Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁴³ Nathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-90.

⁴⁴ Leigh Hunt, *Autobiography* (London, 1840), p. 345. J. R. Planché, in *Recollections and Reflections* (London, 1872), remembered that Braham said "enthoosemusy." Perhaps Byron was not pretending.

⁴⁵ Prothero, *op. cit.*, VI, 505.

"CRIM. CON." read the cover of a sixpenny pamphlet sold in the London streets in the summer of 1816. "Damages One Thousand Pounds!! The Trial between Mr. Henry Wright (Purser of an Indiaman), and Mr. Braham (of Musical Celebrity) for Criminal Conversation with the Plaintiff's Wife."⁴⁶ The tender intimacy with Nancy Storace had been worn away by years of bickering and professional jealousy.⁴⁷ In the spring of 1815 she moved out of Braham's house, and Mrs. Henry Wright moved in. When Henry Wright returned from a year at sea and found his wife pregnant, he filed suit for damages of £5,000. Braham admitted all, but he offered an effective defense: the lady was thirty-seven and had been married before; the husband had known Braham for many years, and if he had been really concerned for his wife's welfare, he would never have allowed her to mingle with "such persons as Mr. Braham and Madame Storace." This reasoning so impressed "the Learned Judge" that he calculated damages to be only one thousand pounds. But the "Eminent Short Hand Writer" who prepared another pamphlet on the trial took a sterner view. "Few and evil," he wrote, "are the days of most Theatrical Characters."⁴⁸

Nancy Storace, indeed, lived only a year longer, and even the *Dictionary of National Biography* suggests that she died of a broken heart. Braham was more resilient. He married, not Mrs. Wright but a Miss Bolton, and probably about this time announced his conversion to the doctrines of the Church of England. This defection from the old faith annoyed Charles Lamb, partly because Braham seems to have supported it by a disputatious public statement which Lamb called "Br—'s RELIGIO DRAMATICI,"⁴⁹ and partly because he was more colorful as an Israelite than as an Anglican. But Lamb was convinced that the conversion was only an intellectual one:

The Hebrew spirit is strong in him in spite of his proselytism. . . . How it breaks out when he sings "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea"! The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph.⁵⁰

Neither his proselytism nor the "Crim. Con." scandal, however, seriously marred his popularity. Oxberry reports that once, shortly before the trial, he was hissed by "a few half-witted persons," but that he made a dignified speech from the stage and got his customary applause.⁵¹ This, of course, was before his side of the case had been

⁴⁶ *The Trial between . . . Wright and . . . Braham* (London, 1816).

⁴⁷ *The Report of the Trial, Wright vs. Braham*, p. 11.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1. The two pamphlets give identical reports of the actual testimony but vary in their memoirs of Braham and in literary and moral embellishments.

⁴⁹ E. V. Lucas, ed., *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* (London, 1903), I, 288: "The Religion of Actors."

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 62: "Imperfect Sympathies" in *Elia*.

⁵¹ Oxberry, *op. cit.*, III, 156.

heard. Afterwards he seems to have been as solidly as ever the favorite of Regency audiences.

In February, 1820, Henry Crabb Robinson wrote in his diary:

Went to Drury Lane for the first time this season. I was better pleased than usual. Though Braham is growing old, he has lost none of his fascination. . . .⁵²

He kept his popularity in other parts of the island as well. He sang frequently in Edinburgh and was often, like Kean and Kemble, a guest at John Ballantyne's lively banquets.⁵³ At the Cambridge Commencement of 1819 he sang oratorio for the Royal Party which earlier had heard Thomas Babington Macaulay recite his gold-medal poem *Pompeii*.⁵⁴ A trip backstage to meet Mr. Braham was important enough for young Benjamin Disraeli to write home about: "Tuesday I went to the new opera at Drury Lane, and was introduced to the Braham's, on whom I have promised to call."⁵⁵ And when Edmund Kean died in 1833, Braham, along with Macready, was one of his pallbearers.⁵⁶

Some of Braham's prominence was due to vigorous disagreement among his hearers. Not everyone was as well pleased as Lamb and Robinson with the quality of his acting. Scott thought him "a beast of an actor, though an angel of a singer."^{56a} J. R. Planché, who wrote the libretto for Weber's *Oberon*, recalled that

Braham, the greatest English tenor perhaps ever known, was about the worst actor ever seen, and the most unromantic person in appearance that can well be imagined.⁵⁷

Washington Irving saw him as Max in *Der Freischütz* and recorded with approval the remark of the man who sat next to him, one of the Smiths of *Rejected Addresses*, that Braham played the part like a "Brummagem Macbeth."⁵⁸

A more serious charge, and one which seems to have stuck, was that Braham contributed to the corruption of taste by his vulgar fondness for vocal fireworks. Thackeray's dear old Fitz used to like, as an old man, to talk about the great singers of his youth: "poor Vaughan, who had so feeble a voice and yet was always called 'such a chaste singer,'" and "Braham, so great, spite of his vulgarity."⁵⁹ William Hazlitt, the very severe dramatic critic of the *London Magazine*, waged a long campaign against the excesses of Braham's

⁵² Robinson, *op. cit.*, I, 428.

⁵³ John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott* (Boston, 1902), III, 202.

⁵⁴ *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 89, Pt. 2 (July, 1819), p. 82.

⁵⁵ Lord Beaconsfield, *Home Letters* (London, 1928), p. 118.

⁵⁶ F. W. Hawkins, *Life of Edmund Kean* (London, 1869), II, 397.

^{56a} Lockhart, *op. cit.*, III, 160.

⁵⁷ Planché, *Recollections and Reflections*, I, 82.

⁵⁸ Stanley Williams, ed., *Journal of Washington Irving (1823-1824)* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), p. 239.

⁵⁹ *Letters of Edward FitzGerald* (London, 1894), I, xii.

style, his "trills, quavers, crotchets, *falsettos*, *bravuras* and all the idle brood of affectation and sickly sensibility," and compared him unfavorably with Thomas Vaughan.⁶⁰ Praise of the feeble-voiced Vaughan seems to have been a fairly frequent vexation to Braham. Once at a dinner party, after some pointed remarks about the chastity of his rival's style, he replied tartly, "A chaste singer is one who never ravishes the ears of his audience."⁶¹ But, delighted and astonished as he too may have been at the things he could do with his voice, he had an artist's scale of musical values. At one of his first meetings with Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, sixth son of George III and a talented and zealous amateur tenor, he sang in impeccable style.

"Why, Braham," said the Duke, "why don't you always sing like that?" "If I did," was the reply, "I should not have the honour of entertaining your royal highness tonight."⁶²

It was perhaps this blend of worldliness and integrity which made the royal duke a frequent visitor at Braham's house and induced him to stand as godfather to Braham's first legitimate son, Augustus.⁶³

When *Der Freischütz* was first produced in England in 1824, Braham had offended the composer, who was then in Germany, by introducing into his part an old love song and an English polonaise which he thought the audience would enjoy.⁶⁴ Nevertheless Weber was delighted two years later to learn that the great tenor had been engaged to sing Sir Huon in the premiere of *Oberon*.⁶⁵ Sitting with Fanny Kemble in a box at Covent Garden shortly after his arrival in London, he heard Braham sing a Handel oratorio and agreed with her judgment that "no singer ever delivered with greater purity or nobler breadth Handel's majestic music," but he was apprehensive about Braham's love of applause and popular tricks.⁶⁶ He was right. No sooner had rehearsals begun than Braham requested a new opening aria which would give him a more dramatic entrance and better display the beauties of his voice. Weber was altogether unwilling, but he gave in. "What else can I do?" he wrote to his wife. "Braham knows his public, he is their idol."⁶⁷ He put the original aria, of which he was especially fond, into the overture and worked up for Braham the big bravura piece "Oh 'Tis a Glorious Sight." "It is made according to your measurements," he said as he handed over

⁶⁰ P. P. Howe, ed., *Works of William Hazlitt* (London, 1933), XVIII, 338.

⁶¹ Henry Phillips, *Musical and Personal Recollections* (London, 1864), pp. 149-50.

⁶² *DNB*, article on Braham. There is an account of the Duke's musical accomplishments in *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, I (1818), 162.

⁶³ Oxberry, *op. cit.*, III, 157.

⁶⁴ Max Maria von Weber, *Carl Maria von Weber* (Leipzig, 1864), II, 660.

⁶⁵ Letter to Sir George Smart in *Leaves from the Journals of Sir George Smart*, ed. Cox (London, 1907), p. 244.

⁶⁶ Frances Anne Kemble, *Records of a Girlhood* (New York, 1880), pp. 97-98.

⁶⁷ Weber, *op. cit.*, II, 670.

the music.⁶⁸ And in tailoring music to Braham's talents he had tailored it to the taste of the English audience. When *Oberon* opened at Covent Garden on April 12, 1826, the aria was cheered with such enthusiasm that it had to be repeated entire.⁶⁹

To some degree, as a result of his close identification with his audience, Braham had a happy inability to avoid making money. Publishers paid him more for one song than they paid other composers for full operas. During the run of *Der Freischütz* he earned £150 a week.⁷⁰ When he let his name be used for a highly priced and exotic songbook, he made £2,500. By about 1830 he had, according to the recollection of his friend Macready, a fortune of some £90,000.⁷¹ But when he turned entrepreneur, his luck and his fortune slipped away. In 1831 he and the actor Frederick Yates invested £40,000 in the Coliseum, an enormous amusement palace with panoramas and an indoor skating rink, and quickly failed.⁷² Four years later he tried again, by himself, and built a theater of his own, the St. James, at a cost of £26,000.

As a producer he had at least one important qualification: he could recognize a talented new writer. In the spring of 1836, possibly through the music critic George Hogarth, he met the young man who called himself "Boz" and who had just married Hogarth's daughter. Charles Dickens had always been badly stage-struck, and when the celebrated Mr. Braham spoke flatteringly of his fame and showed "an earnest desire to be the first to introduce [him] to the public as a dramatic writer,"⁷³ he started work on a number of theatrical projects. With the young composer John Hullah he undertook an "operatic burletta" called *The Village Coquette*. By himself he prepared a dramatization of one of the Boz Sketches, "The Great Winglebury Duel," which was called *The Strange Gentleman* and was produced with some success at the St. James in September.⁷⁴ But it was *The Village Coquette* which won Braham's greatest interest. He told Dickens it was the best such piece since Sheridan's *Duenna*,⁷⁵ and when it opened on December 6, he himself sang the part of Squire Norton.⁷⁶ The critics were not kind. They liked the music well enough, but they were disappointed in the play and very much disappointed in the appearance of the dapper Boz who took a curtain-

⁶⁸ Weber, *op. cit.*, II, 670.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 685.

⁷⁰ Oxberry, *op. cit.*, III, 158.

⁷¹ W. Toynbee, ed., *Diaries of William Charles Macready* (London, 1912), III, 87.

⁷² Edmund Yates, *Recollections and Experiences* (London, 1884), I, 144.

⁷³ Walter Dexter, ed., *Letters of Charles Dickens* (Bloomsbury, 1938), I, 71.

⁷⁴ John Forster, *Life of Charles Dickens*, ed. J. W. T. Ley (New York, 1928), p. 83.

⁷⁵ Dexter, *op. cit.*, I, 80.

⁷⁶ Forster, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

call at the end: they had expected him to be either Samuel Weller or Mr. Pickwick.⁷⁷

Dickens' association with Braham continued for the next three years, but not even the success of *Pickwick* and *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* could sustain him as a dramatist or Braham as a producer. *The Village Coquette* ran less than twenty nights⁷⁸ and disappeared with no trace but the few songs which Braham later sang in concerts⁷⁹ and the friendship which developed between Dickens and John Forster as a result of Forster's harsh review in *The Examiner*.⁸⁰ In March, 1837, Braham produced *Is She His Wife?* "a comic burletta in one act," and a year later a stage version of *Oliver Twist*, which had just finished serial publication.⁸¹ In 1839 Dickens was still going to parties at Braham's house,⁸² but Braham was no longer a producer: late in 1838 he had lost both the St. James and his fortune.⁸³

At the age of sixty-two he was obliged to—and, astonishingly, was able to—take up again a life of full-time concert performance. He sang in *William Tell* and *Don Giovanni*. He toured the provinces, where, in spite of his black wig, people said that he was over eighty.⁸⁴ Then in the fall of 1840, accompanied by his seventeen-year-old son Charles, he sailed for America.⁸⁵

Evidently he knew it was unnecessary to prepare schedules or publicity in advance. To American music lovers he was familiar as "that extraordinary man who has stood for half a century unrivalled in the performance of Handel's mighty music."⁸⁶ To educated Americans in general he was the famous tenor of Elia's "Imperfect Sympathies."⁸⁷ Although he arrived in Boston in October unannounced, he was immediately engaged by the Handel and Haydn Society, and his first appearance was made November 1 in a hall crowded with sixteen

⁷⁷ "Dickens's Correspondence with John Hullah," *The Dickensian*, XVI, No. 96 (December, 1933), 17.

⁷⁸ H. Barton Baker, *History of the London Stage* (London, 1904), p. 458.

⁷⁹ S. J. Adair Fitz-Gerald, "Charles Dickens and the St. James Theater," *The Dickensian*, XVI, No. 2 (April, 1920), 73.

⁸⁰ Forster, *op. cit.*, 83.

⁸¹ Fitz-Gerald, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁸² Dexter, *op. cit.*, I, 195. Relations between the two men seem to have been for a time very friendly. Although Braham was by no means an Important Influence on Dickens, his songs were favorites with some of Dickens' characters. Wilkins Micawber concludes his famous letter with the heroic line "For England, home, and beauty," from "The Death of Nelson" (*David Copperfield*, Chap. 52); the same song is put to good use by Silas Wegg, Chap. 4, Book 4, of *Our Mutual Friend* and by Captain Cuttle in Chap. 48 of *Dombey and Son*; Dick Swiveller in Chap. 56 of *Old Curiosity Shop* takes part in "the popular duet of 'All's Well' with a long shake at the end." See James T. Lightwood, *Charles Dickens and Music* (London, 1912).

⁸³ Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 460.

⁸⁴ See n. 12 above, and Yates, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁸⁵ W. H. Oxberry, *Oxberry's Dramatic Chronology* (London, 1849), p. 8.

⁸⁶ New York Mirror, XX, 399 (December 10, 1842).

⁸⁷ *Idem*.

hundred people.⁸⁸ After all the excited talk which had followed his sudden arrival, Boston was somewhat disappointed. The famous voice was now a little tarnished, and the "extemporaneous embellishments" of Handel shocked the chaste ears of the Handel and Haydn Society. But his performance was beyond question "the greatest musical event" in years, and he sang for the Society twice again that month and twice in February.⁸⁹

New York was more impressed by his virtuosity and quite as respectful to his artistry. An editorial in the *Mirror* welcomed the "spirited veteran" and "unequalled master of English song" and reported that his voice could still pass from "a melodious whisper" to "powerful tones which make the walls of the room vibrate."⁹⁰ He sang in opera and oratorio, in Niblo's Saloon and the Tabernacle, until, as Odell says, "Braham concerts became something of the rage."⁹¹ He sang in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Albany, and Brooklyn. He stayed on for a second season and sang again in Boston, where the great Dr. Channing, sick in bed, wrote to a friend: "My confinement has robbed me of some pleasures which I prize not a little; I mean the concerts of Braham. . . ."⁹² Probably he repaired his fortune in America; certainly his tour made a satisfactory coda to a virtuoso's career. And he could take back with him in a copy of Margaret Fuller's magazine *The Dial* an affectionate and suitably bravura farewell:

. . . with all that may be said in disparagement of Mr. Braham, we believe him to have been the finest tenor of the world; and now that age has crept upon him, we would view his failings with tenderness. . . . We must now estimate him by the power of imagination and fancy the noonday brightness of that sun, which is near its setting. There are many who think he has stayed too long; that he should have "rushed to his burning bed" with undimmed splendor, like that of tropic eve. With such we cannot sympathize. We would cherish to the last that genius over which ages will pass and bring no equal; and hang with rapture over the last echo that remains of the voice of Braham.⁹³

⁸⁸ Charles C. Perkins and John S. Dwight, *History of the Handel and Haydn Society* (Boston, 1893), p. 126.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 126 and 130.

⁹⁰ New York *Mirror*, XX, 399 (December 10, 1842).

⁹¹ George C. D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage* (New York, 1928), IV, 515 and 707.

⁹² W. H. Channing, *Memoir of William Ellery Channing* (London, 1848), III, 467.

⁹³ "Music of the Winter," *The Dial*, I (April, 1841), 542-43. The article was signed only with the initial "T," which George Willis Cooke, in *Historical and Biographical Introduction to Accompany The Dial* (Cleveland, 1902), identifies as that of John Francis Tuckerman, a student in his last year at the Harvard Medical School and an amateur tenor. The phrase in quotation marks is from a passage in *Rokeby*, Canto VI, Stanza XXI, which had been quoted twenty years earlier in *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, III (February, 1821), 274, by another reviewer who felt it unnecessary to identify verses by Sir Walter Scott. This double allusion is evidence not only of Scott's persistent popularity and of the cultural community between Boston and London but also of Braham's ability to outlast his critics.

The Dial's farewell could have been read as a farewell from English audiences also, for Braham was at last an old man. After his return from America he sang less and less frequently, although he did not retire altogether until he had given a reluctant final concert at the age of seventy-five. His children had now become people of some importance. The Reverend Spencer Braham, his son by Nancy Storace, was a canon at Canterbury Cathedral.⁹⁴ His three other sons were all professional singers. His daughter Frances, with whom he lived during his last years,⁹⁵ was the Countess Waldegrave, a close friend of Edward Lear, a great beauty, and a great social and political hostess. When her husband the earl died in 1846, she inherited, among his estates, Walpole's mansion at Strawberry Hill and devoted herself for years to restoring its bizarre splendor.⁹⁶ Although it did not become her main residence until after her father's death in 1856, she was accustomed to spend her weekends there while the restoration was being made,⁹⁷ and so one may assume, without too much romancing in behalf of a tenor's literary fame, that the plaster battlements of Strawberry Hill vibrated occasionally to Braham's powerful tones.

Rutgers University

⁹⁴ Pohl, *op. cit.*, II, 238.

⁹⁵ *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 199 (May, 1856), p. 541.

⁹⁶ *DNB*, article on Frances, Countess Waldegrave.

⁹⁷ Lady Strachey, ed., *Letters of Edward Lear* (London, 1907). Lady Strachey was Braham's granddaughter.

THE VIRGINIA "KNIGHTS" AND THEIR GOLDEN
HORSESHOES: DR. WILLIAM A. CARUTHERS
AND AN AMERICAN TRADITION

By CURTIS CARROLL DAVIS

The knightliest of the knightly race,
Who, since the days of old,
Have kept the lamp of chivalry
Alight in hearts of gold;
The kindest of the kindly band,
Who, rarely hating ease,
Yet rode with Spotswood round the land,
And Raleigh round the seas.

—Francis Orray Ticknor,
"The Virginians of the Valley" (1861)¹

I

When the Georgia physician, Dr. Ticknor, wrote the lines of prancing poetry quoted above, he probably had in mind the novel by Dr. Caruthers on the same subject. Though he had completed the romance by 1838 and may have begun it as early as 1835, the Lexington, Virginia, physician had seen his novel in print for the first time in the pages of *The Magnolia; or, Southern Monthly*, at Savannah, Georgia, in 1841.² As "The Knights of the Golden Horse-Shoe," the serial ran in *The Magnolia* from January through October, but with its subsequent appearance in book form the title of Caruthers' third and last novel has always lacked the "golden." With or without the adjective, and handicapped though it was by an initial book publication from the press of an obscure Alabama publisher,³ the Doctor's retelling of Governor Spotswood's early exploration into the Shenandoah Valley has intrigued generations of readers sufficiently to

¹ First published in the Charleston (S. C.) *Mercury*, July 13, 1861. See Sarah Anne Cheney, *Francis Orray Ticknor*, unpublished M.A. thesis in English literature, Duke University (1934), p. 98.

² A brief notice in the Richmond *Courier*, reprinted in the Lexington *Union* for May 1, 1835 (p. 2, cols. 4-5), advises that the London publisher Richard Bentley had accepted Caruthers' second novel, *The Cavaliers of Virginia* (1834-1835) for English publication, and had also concluded "a prospective arrangement for the simultaneous publication in London and New York, of another historical romance, entitled 'Knights of the Golden Horse Shoe.'" Though *The Cavaliers* subsequently appeared in England (1836-1837), *The Knights* did not. Lewis Gaylord Clark, in the "Editor's Table" of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, XII (July, 1838), 88, of New York City, declared that a friend had "been permitted to peruse the MSS. of a novel" on the subject of what Clark referred to as "The Golden Horse Shoe."

³ Charles Yancey, Wetumpka, Alabama, published *The Knights* in [December] 1845. For a listing of this and others of Yancey's publications, see Rhoda Coleman Ellison, *Check List of Alabama Imprints, 1807-1870* (University, Alabama, 1946), pp. 66-67 et passim.

warrant its reappearance in 1882, 1909, and 1928.⁴ The present paper is not a critique of *The Knights* as a whole,⁵ but an analysis of the glamorizing variations from fact with which Caruthers chose to invest his narrative of the Horseshoe expedition. It is also a summary of what has, through the years, come to light on the subject of those horseshoes. The latter is a minor subject, but rather a fascinating one.

The sentimental words of Ticknor's verse, "The lute and lance of the Old Romance," as he called it, were well adapted to the romantic sheen which has always glimmered over the actions of the Horseshoe Knights. Of course, the romance was there from the start: the trek of a small body of stout-hearted men from the shores of the Tidewater up through the tangled forests of the Piedmont and into the huge and silent Valley of Virginia was an expedition almost hand-tailored for a final outfitting by some writer of fiction. So far as the records show, the first writer to do this outfitting was Caruthers. True, one Arthur Blackmore, a professor of humanities at William and Mary College in 1716, when the future "Knights" performed their journey, composed a long descriptive narrative in Latin verse and presented it to the Governor after his return. But these lines—concerned largely with praising Spotswood and glorifying God—were put on paper before the expedition had become a "tradition" in any sense, and are so commonplace artistically that not one sentence is worth remembering.⁶ Caruthers, on the other hand, at a single stroke succeeded in glorifying so substantially the figure of the Governor and his Knights that, when he had seen his book through its magazine publication in 1841, little chance remained that the Horseshoe gentry would ever be entirely forgotten thereafter. In the annals of either fact or fiction, the western Virginia physician gave Alexander Spotswood (1676-1740) the most protracted commemoration which that curiously neglected man was to receive in almost a century.⁷

⁴ Respectively: Harper and Brothers, Harper's Franklin Square Library, No. 269, September 8, 1882 (4to, pp. 80); A. L. Burt Company, 1909 and 1928 (both editions, pp. vii, 431). All publications in New York City.

⁵ This has been done in the present writer's biography and critical estimate of Caruthers' life and work in the doctoral dissertation in manuscript at Duke University (1947), entitled *Chronicler of the Cavaliers: The Career and Opinions of William Alexander Caruthers, M.D. (1802-1846)*, pp. 358-95.

⁶ [Lyon G. Tyler?], "The Ultra-Montane Expedition," *William and Mary College Quarterly*, First Series, VII (July, 1898), 30-37. This article reprints the English translation by the Rev. George Seagood of Blackmore's "Expeditio Ultramontana" (1716), first published in the *Maryland Gazette*, June 17 and 24, 1729.

⁷ A biography has recently appeared by Leonidas Dodson, *Alexander Spotswood, Governor of Colonial Virginia, 1710-1722* (Philadelphia, 1932). Dodson explains that his account (pp. 238-39) of the expedition is so brief "partly because I felt that the significance of this episode had been exaggerated, and partly because there seemed to be no particular point in giving what would necessarily be, essentially, a paraphrase of Fontaine's excellent first hand account. . . ." (Dodson to the writer, July 14, 1949; on Fontaine, see n. 34 below.) Also to be noted are an address delivered November 21, 1903, before the Ohio chapter of the Society of Mayflower Descendants by Nathaniel P.

It would be interesting to know how many later writers besides the Richmond journalist, W. Page McCarty, were moved to their productions as the result of having read Caruthers' novel. McCarty's *The Golden Horseshoe, a Drama*, partially inspired by *The Knights*,⁹ was published in 1876. Three years later John Esten Cooke—Caruthers' immediate successor as Virginian historical romancer—wrote an article on Spotswood for *Harper's* and in it referred to "the excellent Virginia novel, the *Knights of the Horseshoe*, where the author has built up an edifice of romance upon these few details."¹⁰ In the 1890's Thomas Nelson Page, like the Doctor an alumnus of Washington and Lee University, remarked of Caruthers' last romance that it was "the novel on which his name now rests."¹⁰ Among the historians and antiquarians, a Caruthers contemporary, the Rev. Philip Slaughter, historiographer of the Episcopal diocese of Virginia, observing in 1877 that Caruthers' selection of the Spotswood theme had been "happily chosen," declared: "The author seems to have used due diligence in gathering the fugitive traditions of this adventure which lingered dimly in the minds of his generation." One of the best-informed modern authorities on the history of the Old Dominion,

Dandridge (1846-1910), entitled *The Discovery of the Valley of Virginia by Governor Spotswood* (Cincinnati, 1903), pamphlet, pp. 20; and Armistead C. Gordon's able study, with bibliography, "Governor Alexander Spotswood and the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe," *Men and Events: Chapters of Virginia History* (Staunton, 1923), pp. 117-58. This was an address delivered September 5, 1921, on the erection of the Spotswood cairn at Swift Run Gap (see below, p. 506). Gordon calls *The Knights* "a spirited tale" (*op. cit.*, p. 142).

⁹ The subtitle of this four-act drama (Richmond, 1876) reads: "(Founded on the Historical Accounts, and the Legendary Account by Caruthers, of the 'Tramontane Order,' or Knights of the Golden Horseshoe)." Other works of varying genres which discuss the Spotswood expedition are here listed chronologically:

Moncure D. Conway, *Barons of the Potomack and the Rappahannock* (New York, 1892), Chap. II, pp. 16-31. Hezekiah Butterworth, *In the Days of Jefferson: Or, the Six Golden Horseshoes: A Tale of Republican Simplicity* (New York, 1900); a foolish, formless romance presumably designed as children's reading. William Wallace Scott, *History of Orange County, Virginia* (Richmond, 1907), Chap. XII, pp. 98-113; an earlier version, by a careful Virginia historian, of the article cited in n. 18 below. Robert Armistead Stewart, *Knights of the Golden Horseshoe, and Other Lays* (Richmond, 1909); the title poem consists of eight spirited stanzas in the manner of Browning's "Cavalier Tunes." Elizabeth Coatsworth, *The Golden Horseshoe* (New York, 1935); a children's book. Blair Niles, *The James, Rivers of America Series* (New York, 1939), pp. 123 and 126-27. Agnes Rothery, *Maryland and Virginia Roundabout* (New York, 1947), Chap. XVIII; an informal guidebook by the wife of a professor at the University of Virginia.

¹⁰ Cooke, "Alexander Spotswood," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 59 (June, 1879), pp. 111-14. Caruthers' erroneous date of the expedition as having occurred in 1714 is here repeated, an error which Cooke had not committed ten years earlier in his anonymous "The Horseshoe Knights: A Virginia Legend," *Appleton's Journal*, II (September 25, 1869), 175-76. Cooke's anonymous "The Cocked-Hat Gentry," *Putnam's*, III (March, 1854), 261-67, with its title so reminiscent of Caruthers' own in *The Knights*, is just a generalized presentation. See also n. 27 below.

¹¹ Page, *The Old South: Essays Social and Political* (New York, 1892), p. 84.

Earl G. Swem, though regretting its errors, concedes that *The Knights* "did have a wonderful influence in establishing traditions about Spotswood and his expedition."¹¹

II

It also established a few inaccuracies. They are neither grievous nor abundant. Most of them were caused not through malice pre-pense by the novelist, but through misinformation supplied him by supposedly reliable channels.¹² Others were dictated by fictional

¹¹ The quotation from Slaughter (1808-90) may be found in his *History of St. Mark's Parish, Culpeper County, Virginia* (first ed., 1877), as reprinted in Raleigh T. Green, *Genealogical and Historical Notes on Culpeper County, Virginia* (Culpeper, 1900), p. 36. The quotation from Swem occurs in a letter from Swem to the present writer, January 30, 1942.

¹² From the Dedication to the 1845 edition of *The Knights*, and from a paragraph of acknowledgments at the close of all book editions of the novel, it is now possible to list with some definiteness several contemporary Virginians who assisted Caruthers in his background research.

(1) His most important debt probably was to Charles Campbell (1807-1876), editor of the Petersburg *American Statesman* and the first important modern historian of Virginia. Campbell and Caruthers were distant in-laws, since Campbell's uncle, Samuel LeGrand Campbell, M.D., of Lexington, had married in 1794 Sarah Alexander, sister of Phebe (Alexander) Caruthers, mother of the novelist—a fact which Campbell notes in the Appendix to Chap. XXXVI of the magazine edition of his *History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia*, in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, XIII (December, 1847), 707. Since Campbell's mother, Mildred Walker Moore, was a great-granddaughter of Spotswood, Caruthers himself had therefore a misty and tenuous connection with his fictional hero. In Box 1 of the Charles Campbell Papers, in manuscript at the Library of the College of William and Mary, there are seven letters from Caruthers to Campbell, and three from Campbell to Caruthers, written between the years 1841-1846 and concerned largely with questions of lineage and historical background of families in the colonial Virginia period. I am grateful to Herbert Ganter, Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at William and Mary College, for forwarding me photostats of all this correspondence.

(2) Colonel George W. Spotswood of Illinois and Indiana. Writing to Campbell from Savannah, May 5, 1846, Caruthers says: "I have got stacks of letters from [him] . . . but they are wholly unavailable [?]. The man is so *episodical*, that he never commences with one thing but to remind him of another. He is just like those animals, that will only go in a certain direction, by seizing the reins and [taking?] them into it." At the end of *The Knights* the author thanks Colonel Spotswood for his help. In February, 1851, Charles Campbell wrote to the antiquarian, Lyman C. Draper, who had queried him about the Colonel Spotswood mentioned in Caruthers' novel: "The Colonel Spotswood, of whom you inquire, has been dead for some years, I think." See Lester J. Cappon, ed., "Correspondence between Charles Campbell and Lyman C. Draper, 1846-1872," *WMCO*, Third Series, III (January, 1946), 97.

(3) Robert Page (1764-1840), native of Gloucester County, Virginia, and a U.S. Congressman, 1799-1801. Student at William and Mary College, which he left to become an officer in the Revolutionary army. Died in Clarke County, Va. Caruthers dedicated the 1845 edition of *The Knights* to Vice President John Tyler, himself a Virginian, and to the following four persons from the Williamsburg area:

(4) Robert Saunders (1805-1868), professor of mathematics at, and for a brief period president of, William and Mary College. During the 1830's and 1840's Saunders was an occasional contributor to the *Southern Literary Messenger* at Richmond. There are Saunders manuscript letters in the archives of Colonial Williamsburg, in the George Frederick Holmes Papers in the Duke University Library, and in the Library of the College of William and Mary.

necessity. As we examine them, we shall see that Caruthers has deliberately dramatized those aspects of the journey which are susceptible to such treatment. There were undoubtedly certain points which he wrote down fully believing them true. But as we compare Caruthers' handling of occurrences with actual events along the actual route,¹³ it is clear that the author must have been aware that several of his statements were fiction rather than fact. Such statements, however, reflected details which no imaginative writer could willingly let stand if he thought, for purposes of fiction, they should be otherwise. Thus matters stood with Caruthers: "He was," as has been remarked of John Esten Cooke, "fond of historical fact, but he liked to contemplate it in terms of romance." Caruthers' genuine fondness for historical fact is clearly demonstrated in at least one of his letters to the Petersburg historian, Charles Campbell, whom, it appears, he regularly interrogated according to "our old plan of question & answer."¹⁴ Despite such precautions, Caruthers announced, early during the serial run of *The Knights*, "the many, very many inaccuracies" which it contained. Distressed, he had at first decided to follow each installment with an errata slip, but later abandoned the idea upon reflecting that nobody read such items anyway, and that, if anyone did, the expedient would mend matters but little.¹⁵

Caruthers' expedition contains "hundreds" of men, since the original scheme had been for each gentleman to muster fifty followers.¹⁶ In actual fact, the Governor's official journal reveals that there were only "63 Men & 74 Horses marching beyond the high Ridge of the Mountains."¹⁷ Of this group, John Fontaine, an intelligent observer who had come along for the ride, counted an even dozen "Gentlemen,"¹⁸ whereas Caruthers, as we shall see, awards horseshoes in due course to thirty-two. But if we reflect for a moment, we shall at once concede that a sizable number of men is fictionally appropriate,

(5) Colonel Robert McCandlish (d. ca. 1859), distinguished lawyer, and judge in the High Court of Chancery, Williamsburg. There are some McCandlish letters in the G. F. Holmes Papers, Duke University Library.

(6) John Munford Gregory, Jr. (1804-1888), lawyer, jurist, acting Governor of Virginia, 1842-1843.

(7) Dr. Robert G. Peachy. Unidentified.

¹³ A clear and detailed map of the entire route, illustrated by two engravings in the Romantic tradition, done in Caruthers' time, may be seen in *Pageant of America*, ed. Ralph H. Gabriel (New Haven, 1925-1929), II, 12.

¹⁴ The Cooke quotation is from John O. Beaty, *John Esten Cooke, Virginian* (New York, 1922), p. 33. Cooke's romances portray Williamsburg about half a century later than does *The Knights*. The Caruthers quotation from a manuscript letter by him, dated Savannah, February 26, 1842, to Campbell at Petersburg (Charles Campbell Papers, Library of the College of William and Mary).

¹⁵ *The Magnolia*, III (February, 1841), 94.

¹⁶ *The Knights*, pp. 381 and 45, respectively.

¹⁷ "Journal of the Lieut. Governor's Travels and Expeditions Undertaken for the Public Service of Virginia," *WMCQ*, Second Series, III (January, 1923), 43.

¹⁸ For an apparently definitive article, see William Wallace Scott, "The Knights of the Horseshoe: Their Route," *WMCQ*, Second Series, III (July, 1923), 149.

when the distance they are to travel is considered. A sizable number is also fictionally necessary, in view of the Indians they are to encounter: sixty-three souls could not have made so slam-bang a fight as is later to be staged all over the side of a mountain! On the other hand, Caruthers' expedition is, in its general composition, approximately correct. The novelist has formed it of the gentry, plus the orderly Rangers or "regular troops" (one of Caruthers' ancestors had been a Ranger captain), plus the rough-and-ready militia, who accounted for the bulk of the effectives.¹⁹ The Governor, of course, is supreme commander, while Joe Jarvis—the novelist's humorous character—is the white guide, or, as such men "were called in that day, and indeed long afterward, *scouts*."²⁰ Actually, the real expedition contained no group formally known as the militia, and the scouts' roles were taken by several friendly Indians.²¹

Caruthers' sprightly army emerges en masse from Williamsburg, and of course two of our heroines accompany their swains for some miles outside the town.²² "It was," the novelist assures his readers,

a gallant sight to behold that bright and joyous band of cavaliers, in their plumes and brilliant dresses, and fluttering banners, not yet soiled by the dust and toil of travel, as they wound through the green vistas fresh from the hands of Nature, and their prancing steeds still elastic and buoyant with high blood and breeding.²³

"Ail in the blue, unclouded weather," is this not just the way the expedition should have set out? But alas, it did not. On August 20, 1716, the Governor and John Fontaine rode out of Williamsburg and made their way inland (at one point passing over part of the lands of a man named Madison, whose son was later to attain to some distinction in United States history.)²⁴ After picking up the historian, Robert Beverley,²⁵ at his house—and sampling some of his

¹⁹ *The Knights*, pp. 289-90. Caruthers' maternal great-grandfather, Archibald ("Ersbell") Alexander, of Rockbridge County, Virginia, had, about 1750, commanded just such a group of Rangers as the novelist here describes. Old "Ersbell's" great-grandson declares: "He raised a company of men, called Rangers; and as their captain performed a tour of duty on the Great Kanawha and the Ohio [rivers]. For this service he received, in connection with other officers, a right to locate several thousand acres of land in Kentucky." James W. Alexander, *Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D., LL.D.* (New York, 1857), p. 7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

²¹ Philip Alexander Bruce, *The Virginia Plutarch* (Chapel Hill, 1929), I, 130.

²² *The Knights*, p. 296. This chapter, entitled "The Day of Departure," has been reprinted by Francis Coleman Rosenberger in his recent compilation, *Virginia Reader: A Treasury of Writings from the First Voyages to the Present* (New York, 1948), pp. 368-74.

²³ *The Knights*, p. 350. This passage describes the expedition after it is well under way.

²⁴ Irving Brant, *James Madison: The Virginia Revolutionist* (New York, 1941), Chap. I.

²⁵ For a biographical sketch, see [Fairfax Harrison], "Robert Beverley, the Historian of Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXXVI (October, 1928), 333-44. Harrison's article on Beverley in the *DAB* (1929),

home-made wine—they proceeded on to the frontier station of Germanna. There at Germanna, not at Williamsburg, the Governor met with the rest of his party; and there the expedition as a whole finally got under way. It departed from Germanna on August 29. It did all of this in the year 1716, not, as Caruthers blithely assumes, two years earlier in 1714. True, he had ample precedent for his howler in the "classical" works on Virginia by the early English chroniclers, Sir William Keith and John Oldmixon; and Oldmixon's *The British Empire in America* was on the novelist's writing-table in May, 1841.²⁶ But probably his clinching reason for thinking 1714 the correct date was that his in-law and mentor, Charles Campbell, also thought so, and undoubtedly wrote him to that effect.²⁷

Before the little cavalcade filed away from Germanna, all its horses had been shod on August 27. There was no delay whatsoever because of crippled horses, once the party got out into the wilderness. Caruthers' in-law, the scrupulous Petersburg historian, Charles Campbell, must have known this, and the fact is implied by the Rev. Hugh Jones.²⁸ Yet the novelist flatly declares that

we state, upon undoubted authority, that among the great number of horses employed in the enterprise which we have just seen under way, not one had ever been shod. . . . Such was the fact, as will be seen hereafter, by the remarkable circumstance from which our humble narrative takes its name.²⁹

II, 233, is a condensation of the *VMHB* account. Beverley's *History of Virginia*, first edition (London, 1705), has been handsomely reissued with an introduction and notes by Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, 1947).

²⁶ See Keith, *History of the British Plantations in America: Part I, Containing the History of Virginia* (London, 1738), p. 173; and Oldmixon, *British Empire in America*, second edition (London, 1741), I, 401-02. While in the process of supplying installments of *The Knights* to its magazine publisher, Caruthers wrote to Charles Campbell from Savannah on May 25, 1841, asking for certain historical data. One sentence from this manuscript letter begins: "From the books before me viz Burke [*sic*]—Oldmixon & one or two minor ones it is impossible for me to ascertain. . . ." (Charles Campbell Papers, Library of William and Mary College). Burk's *History of Virginia* (Petersburg, 1804-1805), which was much used by Caruthers for background to his *Cavaliers of Virginia*, contains only passing reference to Spotswood and none at all to the expedition.

²⁷ See the magazine edition of Campbell's *History* in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, XIII (August, 1847), 454 and notes, in one of which Campbell says: "A novel, called 'The Knight of the Horse-Shoe [*sic*],' by Dr. William A. Caruthers, derives its name and subject from Spotswood's exploit." In the revised edition of his *History* (Philadelphia, 1860) Campbell corrects the erroneous date and moves his mention of Caruthers and *The Knights* up into the text (*op. cit.*, pp. 387, 390, respectively). The 1714 error is repeated by John Esten Cooke in his children's book, *Stories of the Old Dominion* (New York, 1879), but is corrected in his *Virginia: A History of the People* (Boston and New York, 1911).

²⁸ Hugh Jones, *The Present State of Virginia* [London, 1724], ed. Joseph Sabin (New York, 1865), p. 14. As to just "Which Hugh Jones?" see n. 58 below, and the article of that title by Grace W. Landrum in *WMCO*, Second Series, XXIII (October, 1943), 474-92. There were two of them: the Hugh Jones of *The Present State* came from Hereford, England, to America in 1716, occupied a chair at William and Mary College, and died in 1760.

²⁹ *The Knights* (1845), II, Chap. XVI, par. 7. The curious in such matters may wish to read what Fairfax Harrison has to say on the subject of "The

There is no question that Caruthers is sincere. He was also grossly misinformed. That fact, however, merely adds another fillip of drama to the plot of *The Knights of the Golden Horse-Shoe*.

Two other fillips are a lack of food and the presence of hostile Indians. The threat from the former hardship, though not emphasized unduly, is explicitly stated.⁸⁰ As to the threat from human enemies, that provides the shining face of danger which confronts the Knights all along their route, culminating in a battle royal toward the end of the march. But on the subject of the Knights' sustenance modern scholarship reports bluntly: "Nor did the men run any risk of starvation. On the contrary, they fared abundantly on the flesh of deer, bear, and turkey, which the rangers killed from hour to hour."⁸¹ And on the subject of hostile Indians, we learn that the journey "was varied only by the recurrence of petty incidents. An unexpected contact with a hornet's nest and the stings of its occupants, or the hiss of a coiled rattlesnake were the only dangers which the band seems to have had to face."⁸²

Once arrived in the Shenandoah Valley, asserts Caruthers, "Two delightful weeks were spent" there.⁸³ In actuality only two nights, those of September 5 and 6, were passed in the Valley by the expedition as a whole.⁸⁴ The novelist also asserts: "Not a white man had ever trod that virgin soil from the beginning of the world."⁸⁵ Certainly, after the perils the Knights had so bravely undergone, this is what should have been. As a matter of fact, while Caruthers' statement is not strictly accurate, enough of it remains true as to give the Governor the substance of that priority which Caruthers ascribes to him. In the spring of 1712 one of the pioneer explorers of Carolina, the Swiss baronet, Christoph von Graffenried, had sojourned in Williamsburg, where he added much to Spotswood's already kindled enthusiasm about the arcadia beyond the Blue Ridge. Von Graffenried had penetrated the Valley. So, too, probably, had Louis Michell, as early as 1706.⁸⁶ As P. A. Bruce explains these and later attempts at exploration,

Equine FFVs: A Study of the Evidence for the English Horses Imported into Virginia before the Revolution," *VMHB*, XXXV (October, 1927), 329-70.

⁸⁰ *The Knights*, pp. 303 and 330.

⁸¹ Bruce, *op. cit.*, I, 131.

⁸² *Idem*.

⁸³ *The Knights*, p. 418. Caruthers' error persists in such a work as that by Edward Ehrlich Smith, *Our Virginia; a Description of Virginia for Young People* (Richmond, 1923).

⁸⁴ Ann Maury, trans. and ed., *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family* (New York, 1853), pp. 288-89. This volume prints from the original manuscripts the journal of John Fontaine, hereinafter cited as Fontaine. Since Fontaine's journal, or diary—the primary source for information on the tramontane expedition—remained in England until just prior to the publication of the Maury volume, Caruthers almost certainly had no access to it. His highly probable ignorance of the Fontaine narrative is to be induced from his omission of Fontaine's name in his list of those presented with horseshoes (see n. 62 below).

⁸⁵ *The Knights*, pp. 395-96.

⁸⁶ Bruce, *op. cit.*, I, 129.

Some brave explorers had passed it further south . . . some had crept down from the north behind the barrier [of the Blue Ridge]; but none so far had gone straight to the base of that towering chain in its central division, and from its top, at that point, looked down on the lower reaches of the Shenandoah.³⁷

Today the casual motorist can glide along the very crest of that "towering chain" on the smooth macadam of the Skyline Drive. Governor Spotswood had had to do it the hard way. It was the dramatic way, too.

According to the novelist, the expedition returned to Williamsburg not long before Christmas Day, 1714. On that day, amid a merry snowstorm, the Governor awards the shoes in the House of Burgesses. Such an ending is, historically, too good to be true. The real expedition returned to the capital on September 17, 1716. By modern computation, it had covered the great distance of 441 miles.³⁸

These, then, are the Doctor's chief errors along the route. There will be little disputing that, for fictional purposes, they were changes for the better. By way of contrast, let us see in what ways the novelist followed the real route of the expedition. For example, when he speaks of "the river along the banks of which they mainly marched,"³⁹ he probably knew that this was the Rapidan. According to a recent scholar, "The Expedition started on that river . . . continued to follow the valley of that river almost to its source, the only thing to do."⁴⁰ Moreover, as the Knights get farther along their route, Caruthers informs us that "Game was found in great abundance"⁴¹—which would indicate that perhaps he knew the true state of affairs concerning the sustenance of the Order. Furthermore, when he declares that the Governor's "stock of wines was known to be almost untouched" and proceeds to describe a feast Spotswood gives the Knights, one evening out under the trees,⁴² we suspect that he also knew (Charles Campbell could have told him⁴³) the facts on what has since become celebrated as a most bibulous expedition.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130. On the directness of the Knights' route, see n. 38 below.

³⁸ Charles E. Kemper, "Spotswood Mileage Accounts," *WMCQ*, Second Series, III (July, 1923), 172: "A map of Virginia, published by the U. S. Geological Survey, Washington, shows by its scale of miles that the distance travelled was 441½ miles. The writer measured the distance in a straight line from Williamsburg to Germanna, and from the latter place to present Elkton, in Rockingham County, Virginia, and it is a tribute to the Governor's honesty that he stated the distance travelled with almost mathematical exactness at 445 miles, as demonstrated by a modern map. The measurement also shows that there was no wandering upon the expedition. Gov. Spotswood and the 'Horse-Shoe Knights' marched in straight lines to the end of the journey."

³⁹ *The Knights*, p. 330.

⁴⁰ Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-51.

⁴¹ *The Knights*, p. 364.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 364-65.

⁴³ See Campbell, *History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia* (Philadelphia, 1860), p. 389. This is the edition used in the present article. First edition, Richmond, 1847. For a biographical sketch, by another and later Petersburg newspaper editor, see Edward A. Wyatt, IV, "Charles Campbell: Virginia's 'Old Mortality,'" *Southern Sketches*, First Series, No. 5, ed. J. D. Eggleston (Charlottesville, 1935).

Again, Caruthers' prominent reference to "the Gap of the mountains"⁴⁴ suggests that he was aware of the importance of Swift Run Gap—between the modern towns of Stanardsville and Elkton, on the Greene and Rockingham county lines—to the success of the slender little cavalcade.⁴⁵ Lastly, he is correct in his assertion, implied rather than explicit, that the round trip required only "a few weeks,"⁴⁶ since the time consumed going and coming was twenty-eight days.⁴⁷

What, in conclusion, may be said as to the outcome of the expedition? Did the Horseshoe Knights ride over those Blue Mountains in vain? Were they following only a will-o'-the-wisp, or the star of empire itself? As Caruthers' Spotswood stands atop the eminence which history's Spotswood christened Mount George (the present-day High Top)⁴⁸ we are told that he

carried his thoughts into the future, and imagined the fine country which he beheld peopled, and glowing under the hands of the husbandman; and all his bright anticipations were more than realized. At length he turned to [Bernard] Moore . . . and said, "They call me a visionary, but what imagination ever conjured up a vision like that?"⁴⁹

In its immediate effects, this vision was to have no practical result. As one historian puts the matter,

The westward movement did not roll forward with an orderly and irresistible force like the waves of the sea. On the contrary, it was as fitful as a mountain stream, now swirling, now eddying, and its course was deflected by many crosscurrents.⁵⁰

Indeed, the novelist himself admits: "We believe that it was more than ten years afterwards before any effectual settlements were made in the Valley,"⁵¹ and he was precisely correct in his estimate.⁵²

Nevertheless, looking back from the lofty summit of retrospect, we of today can see that Caruthers' estimate of Spotswood as a Columbus of the mountain ranges was not a wrong one. His act was a flinging down of the gauntlet before the face of the wilderness. "The continent"—as Henry Adams was to describe its challenge to Americans

⁴⁴ *The Knights*, p. 383.

⁴⁵ Kemper, *loc. cit.*, p. 172. The Gap had probably been first discovered in the summer of 1716 by the German settlers at Germanna, to whom Spotswood had granted the courtesy title of Rangers in 1714.

⁴⁶ *The Knights*, p. 423. By the twentieth century, this duration had risen to six weeks (1), and become "An error of such long standing that it passes without question in respectable company," according to John W. Wayland, "Fact and Fiction in Virginia History," *Tyler's Quarterly Magazine*, X (October, 1928), 103.

⁴⁷ Bruce, *op. cit.*, I, 130.

⁴⁸ Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 152. High Top and Saddle Back (fifty feet lower, and formerly Mt. Spotswood) together form natural guardians to the Gap itself.

⁴⁹ *The Knights*, p. 396.

⁵⁰ Thomas P. Abernethy, *Three Virginia Frontiers* (Baton Rouge, 1940), pp. 61-62.

⁵¹ *The Knights* (1845), II, Chap. XXIX, note.

⁵² Abernethy, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

of a century later—"lay before [him], like an uncovered ore-bed."⁵³ If the expedition was not in itself a catalyst to immediate emigration, it did, as Frederick Jackson Turner asserts, give "special impetus"⁵⁴ to the settlement of the whole Piedmont area in due time. Dan E. Clark would extend this impetus to an influence upon frontier pioneering in general. Though believing that the expedition was probably among the less significant of the Governor's activities, he confesses that "it constituted pageantry such as the English in America seldom performed."⁵⁵ Ralph H. Gabriel declares: "The Spotswood expedition did more than any other previous event to turn the eyes of Englishmen to that region of forests and prairies beyond the mountains."⁵⁶ Philip Alexander Bruce points out:

Other men have crept silently through those same wooded fastnesses before he did, but he was the first to do so with the flare of a Spanish conquistador. . . . In the mind's eye his figure will always stand on the lofty pinnacle of the Blue Ridge, with a guiding, uplifted finger pointed straight towards the Pacific Ocean and the land of infinite fertility between.⁵⁷

One hundred and one years after his death, the spirit of the gallant Governor assumed his striking pose again. As the far-darting eyes of the American Eagle began to glimpse a manifest destiny in the westerling sun, another Virginian summoned the shade of the Horse-Shoe Knight out of the history books, and put him on the march once more.

III

If the expedition did not, then, really undergo vexatious delay for lack of horseshoes, nevertheless this article of equine apparel was a sufficient rarity to residents of the Tidewater for the matter to stick in the Governor's mind. What resulted was a gallant gesture which has provided a bright bit of lore in the history of the Old Dominion from that year to this. Hugh Jones tells the story in a single, brief, matter-of-fact paragraph:

For this Expedition they were obliged to provide a great Quantity of Horse-Shoes; (Things seldom used in the lower Parts of the Country, where there are few Stones:) Upon which Account the Governor upon their Return presented each of his Companions with a Golden Horse-Shoe, (some of which I have seen studded with valuable Stones resembling the Heads of Nails) with this inscription on the one Side: *Sic juvat transcendere montes*: And on the other is written the tramontane Order.⁵⁸

⁵³ Henry Adams, *The Formative Years: A History of the United States during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison*, ed. Herbert Agar (New York, 1947), II, 999.

⁵⁴ Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York, 1928), p. 90.

⁵⁵ Clark, *The West in American History* (New York, 1937), pp. 88-89.

⁵⁶ Gabriel, *op. cit.*, II, 12.

⁵⁷ Bruce, *op. cit.*, I, 119.

⁵⁸ Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*, ed. Sabin, p. 14. So, too, the Rev. Andrew Burnaby: "The soil [of the Virginia Tidewater] is principally of sand; and there are few, if any pebbles, within a hundred miles of the shore; for

(As genuinely exotic objects in the flat and sandy Tidewater, the shoes were quite appropriate symbols of westward expansion.) Taking a cue from this contemporary chronicler, therefore, Caruthers has Spotswood write, while still in the Valley, to Commissary James Blair at Williamsburg the following injunction:

"I send you a list of others of the young gentry who distinguished themselves. I wish you to have a golden horse-shoe made for each of them to wear upon the breast, as a distinction for meritorious services, with the motto on one side, "*Sic juvat transcendere montes*" ["Thus does he rejoice to cross the mountains"], and on the other, "*The Tramontane Order*." Have them ready, if possible, by our return. . . ."⁸⁰

When the expedition returns to Williamsburg, the shoes await its members. In the Hall of the House of Burgesses, on "the twenty-fifth of December, seventeen hundred and fourteen [*sic*],"⁸⁰ the Governor makes the formal presentation. Dressed "in full court costume," Spotswood faces the assembly:

Before him was placed a table on which were spread out various ornaments of jewelry, many of them studded with gems and precious stones, but all of them wrought into the shape of horse-shoes.⁸¹

The warrior makes presentation "of these badges" to no less than thirty-two young gentry. (Caruthers lists them all by name, but of his group only three were probably there in historical fact.⁸²) To them the Governor says:

which reason the Virginians in these parts never shoe their horses." Burnaby, *Travels through the Middle Settlements in North America, 1759 and 1760*, third edition (London, 1798), p. 42. Much earlier, in 1699, an English clergyman who held a cure in Maryland, the Rev. Hugh Jones—no relation to the author of *The Present State*—made the same statement (never published) in a letter to Benjamin Woodruff, F.R.S., viz., that "our Soile is generally sandy free from Stone wch makes itt verry convenient for travelling & we have no occasion for Shoeing our horses except in frosty weather." For both the Burnaby and Jones references I am indebted to Arthur Pierce Middleton, Director of Research, Colonial Williamsburg (letter of June 30, 1949).

⁸⁰ *The Knights*, p. 414.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 424.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 426. Cappon, in his edition of the Campbell-Draper correspondence (*loc. cit.*, p. 92 n.), says that ten members of the expedition "have been identified with certainty or nearly so," and of the ten he lists, two are also given by Caruthers: "William Beverley" and "Francis Brooke." The early Virginian historian, Robert Beverley, was the bearer of that name who accompanied Spotswood, as was Robert Brooke, Jr., official Surveyor of Landgrants in western Virginia. A Brooke descendant, St. George Tucker Brooke, therefore concludes that Caruthers "evidently guessed the name of the Brooke, who certainly accompanied Governor Spotswood" ("The Brooke Family," *VMHB*, XVIII [October, 1910], 456). Not cited by Cappon, but listed by Caruthers, is one "William Moseley." This man may well have been Edward Moseley, born 1661, as suggested in the anonymous article, "Moseley Family of Lower Norfolk County," *VMHB*, V (January, 1898), 330. Not cited by either Cappon or Caruthers is Stephen Harnsberger, who is traditionally supposed to have accompanied Spotswood, as reported by John W. Wayland, *History of Rockingham County, Virginia* (Dayton, Virginia, 1912), p. 427. One concludes that Car-

"May you wear them, gentlemen, through long and happy lives, and when you descend honored and lamented to your graves, may they descend as heirlooms to your children. When the wilderness which you have discovered and conquered shall blossom as the rose—as most assuredly it will—these badges may be sought after by the antiquarians of a future age as honored mementos of the first pioneers of their happy and favored country. Let them be religiously preserved, I charge you."⁶³

Preserved they no doubt were, and sought after by antiquarians they most certainly have been. But along with the search there has also existed an ancillary uncertainty as to the precise type of jewel with which the shoes were studded. Caruthers does not tell us. He even implies that not all of them were so studded. At any rate, he was not satisfied with Hugh Jones's statement alone; so he wrote, probably to many, certainly to one, of his contemporaries about the gems. "Many are the persons still living in Virginia," the novelist asserts,

who have seen with their own eyes these Golden Horse-Shoes. Indeed, we were some time upon the trace of one of the curious relics itself, and were only prevented from pursuing our researches to a successful issue by the want of time and the distance of our present residence [Savannah, Georgia] from the scene of the celebrated adventure.⁶⁴

From near Fredericksburg, on February 25, 1841, Judge Francis Taliaferro Brooke, of the Virginia Court of Appeals, wrote in reply to a Caruthers inquiry of February 5 on the subject of the "curious relics." The Judge declared that he "had seen, in the possession of the eldest branch of my family, a Golden Horse-shoe, set with garnets. . . ." (Caruthers printed this letter at the close of his novel.) Eight years later, in June, 1849, the historian, Charles Campbell,

ruthers garnered his total of thirty-two Knights from personal research and conversation with contemporary Virginians.

⁶³ *The Knights*, p. 426.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, last two pages. In his *History of Orange County, Virginia* (Richmond, 1907), p. 100, William Wallace Scott, who has adorned the front cover of his book with the horseshoe device, takes note of this Brooke letter to Caruthers and says: "It is very remarkable, however, that all these jewelled tokens of the expedition have disappeared." Also noting the Brooke letter is St. George Tucker Brooke, in "Notes and Queries," *WMCQ*, First Series, III (October, 1894), 135. In his autobiography Judge Francis T. Brooke tells how his grandfather "became the Surveyor of the State [of Virginia], and was with the Governor when he first crossed the Blue Ridge, for which he received from the Executive a medal, a gold horse-shoe set with garnets, and worn as a brooch, which I have seen in the possession of Edmund Brooke, who belonged to the oldest branch of the family." See Francis T. Brooke, *Narrative of My Life; For My Family* (Richmond, 1849), pp. 6-7. This well-written, interesting ninety-page narrative has been called "an excessively rare work" by Edmund K. Alden in his sketch of Judge Brooke in *DAB* (1929), III, 69. I have used the copy in the Virginia Historical Society library, Richmond; but the narrative has been reprinted in full in the two following works: Louise P. du Bellet, *Some Prominent Virginia Families* (Lynchburg, Virginia, 1907), II, 343-67; "A Family Narrative of a Revolutionary Officer," *Magazine of History, with Notes & Queries*, XIX, Extra No. 74 (1921), 77-115. Judge Brooke, who was born in 1763, died at his home, "St. Julien," near Fredericksburg, on March 3, 1851. A rather lengthy, anonymous obituary is "The Late Judge Brooke," *Virginia Historical Register and Literary Note Book*, IV (April, 1851), 116-17.

wrote to a fellow antiquarian, Lyman C. Draper, about the shoe mentioned by Judge Brooke, "in whose family," Campbell told Draper,

the little tramontane horse-shoe was & perhaps is still preserved. I have indeed a wine-bottle stamp or decanter stopper of green glass with a horse-shoe stamp on it—dug up in the yard at Chelsea (seat of Bernard Moore) some years ago—but the bottle or decanter may have been a present from the Governor.⁶⁵

Campbell tells us that "some" of the shoes were set with jewels, though he remains unspecific as to their type. He declares, however, that he had learned from a descendant of Spotswood himself, "the late Mrs. Susan Bott, of Petersburg," that she had actually seen the Governor's own shoe, and that it was small enough to be worn on a watch-chain. (In 1846 Campbell mailed Caruthers a facsimile of Spotswood's signature.⁶⁶) On the other hand, P. A. Bruce says flatly that the shoes were, each of them, "set with diamonds,"⁶⁷ but does not tell where he gained this information.

Almost a century later, in 1942, in response to a published appeal by the present writer,⁶⁸ there came a letter in the mail which very neatly supported the statements of Judge Brooke and of "the late Mrs. Susan Bott." From Washington, D.C., Miss May L. Allen wrote to say that, as a girl, wintering in St. Augustine, Florida, she had, around 1885 or 1890, made the acquaintance of Dr. Horace Caruthers, the novelist's eldest son. She recalled that he "wore one of the golden horseshoes—set in garnets on his watch-chain—having inherited it. . . ."⁶⁹ In a subsequent letter Miss Allen reiterated:

I am sure that Dr. [Horace] Caruthers' horseshoe was set in garnets and that he told me the Crusaders had carried garnets—that they were called "the lode stone of love." . . . I understood him to say that he had inherited it—the horseshoes were to be inherited by the oldest son.⁷⁰

Hence it would appear that, some time after the 1845 publication of *The Knights*, its author had been successful in his search for one of the little baubles that gave the book its name.

On the face of it, the probability would be that the horseshoes were set with garnets, rather than diamond-studded, if only for the reason of expense. Sentiment has its financial limits, even to a royal Gov-

⁶⁵ Lester J. Cappon, *loc. cit.*, p. 92.

⁶⁶ Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 390 n., for the Bott quotation. Campbell's letter to Caruthers, dated Petersburg, June 21, 1846, and conveying the facsimile, reposes in the Campbell Papers at the Library of William and Mary College, and is wholly occupied with supplying the novelist with genealogical data on the Spotswood and Dandridge families and extracts from Spotswood's will. Campbell's researches in this line resulted in his *Genealogy of the Spotswood Family in Scotland and Virginia* (Albany, New York, 1868).

⁶⁷ Bruce, *op. cit.*, I, 132.

⁶⁸ In the *New York Times Book Review*, February 22, 1942, p. 23.

⁶⁹ May L. Allen to the writer, May 30, 1942.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, June 10, 1942. On Horace Caruthers, who was the physician in attendance at the death of Washington Irving, see the present writer's "Tardy Reminiscence: Some Recollections of Horace Caruthers, 1824-1894," *Westchester County Historical Bulletin*, XXIV (July, 1948), 77-87.

error. This fact the Governor found out to his rue, it appears. According to Caruthers, Spotswood declared that he had "been authorized by his Majesty's council"⁷¹ to bestow the shoes upon the young cavaliers. Whether this was historically so or not, His Majesty's Government refused to pay for them.⁷² When Spotswood found this out, "he cheerfully assumed the cost himself."⁷³ As for Caruthers, he quite possibly never glimpsed one of the gems with his own eyes; but if he did not, he solaced his imagination by having a large reproduction of a shoe, with the *Sic juvat* . . . inscription running around it, imprinted on the covers of the magazine and book editions of his novel.

As the years tick by after this, it is some time before we begin to hear rumors of the appearance of gold horseshoes. Then, in 1869, the novelist John Esten Cooke published an article on the Knights in which he remarked that "one of the horseshoes in question, decorated with garnets in place of nails . . . is carefully preserved by a Virginia family," though Cooke does not cite the family's name.⁷⁴ In 1870 a silver knee-buckle, studded with diamonds and thought to have been lost by one of the Spotswood cavalcade, was found near Elkton, Rockingham County.⁷⁵ Prior to his death in 1888, W. W. Corcoran (the art-gallery man) had seen a shoe in the Washington area.⁷⁶ Some time before 1912 a shoe was reported in Georgia.⁷⁷

By the mid-1940's, at Richmond, however, certain more substantial occurrences came to pass: no less than two tiny horseshoes reached public notice. One shoe is an admitted imitation of the original, and the authenticity of the other, though probable, remains to be proved. Both baubles give us a couple of surprises. The imitation, which is

⁷¹ *The Knights*, pp. 425-26. In the 1845 edition, II, notes to Chap. XXX, Caruthers briefly ponders the question—which has also attracted the attention of later antiquarians—whether a mere colonial governor could, did he so desire, establish an Order of Knighthood. The consensus is that he could not.

⁷² Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

⁷³ Bruce, *op. cit.*, I, 132.

⁷⁴ [Cooke], "The Horseshoe Knights: A Virginia Legend," *Appleton's Journal*, II (September 25, 1869), 175-76.

⁷⁵ The historian Joseph A. Waddell quotes the following letter to him from Charles W. S. Turner, Esq.: "In 1870 a silver knee buckle, of rare beauty and value, set in diamonds, pronounced genuine by competent jewelers, was found near Elkton, Rockingham County. It is believed that this buckle was lost by one of Spotswood's cavalcade. The silver was discolored by age, and the brilliants somewhat discolored by long exposure to the elements. It was found, and is now held, by one of the Bear family." Waddell, *Annals of Augusta County, Virginia, from 1726 to 1871*, second edition (Staunton, 1902), p. 19 n.

⁷⁶ St. George Tucker Brooke, "Notes & Queries," *WMCQ*, First Series, III (October, 1894), 135. The stone, which was owned by one Edmund Brooke of Georgetown, now part of the District of Columbia, was presumably identical with that cited in n. 64 above.

⁷⁷ Captain J. Samuel Harnsberger related to the historian, John W. Wayland, that Joseph M. Harnsberger, late of Port Republic (Rockingham County), had seen this shoe while on a visit to Georgia. It derived from the family of Stephen Harnsberger—descendant of the alleged Spotswood Knight of the same name (see n. 62 above)—who had removed from Virginia to Georgia in 1792-1793. See Wayland, *op. cit.*, p. 427.

owned by Miss Sallie Spotswood Beach of Richmond, derives ultimately from an original said to have been presented by Governor Spotswood to his son-in-law, Bernard Moore.⁷⁸ It remained in the Moore family, from which Miss Beach is descended, until the Civil War, but during that period was stolen from "Chelsea," the Moore family estate, by a Yankee soldier. After the conflict, Leiper Moore Robinson reproduced from memory a sketch of the tiny gem, had it created in miniature by Tiffany of New York City, and presented the resultant piece of costume jewelry to his fiancée, Mary Spotswood Campbell (daughter of the historian, Charles Campbell). Before her death, Mrs. Robinson gave the shoe to Miss Beach. The surprise embodied in the little relic (it is about an inch square) lies in the fact that its precious-stone nailheads are not garnets: the shoe is studded with four diamonds and five sapphires.⁷⁹

That Leiper Moore Robinson was probably sketching those stones from an accurate memory is given strong corroboration in the physical appearance of the second horseshoe, which was discovered during the autumn of 1946 in the window of a Richmond pawnshop, where it had been abandoned by a noncommittal old gentleman who had apparently seen better days. The present owner, Mrs. James B. Stone of Richmond (by whose sister the tiny roman-gold trophy was found), describes it as follows:

The horse-shoe is about the size of a Phi Beta Kappa Key. It is now mounted on a stick pin, but clearly shows that a ring or loop, which would have made it suitable for use as a watch charm, has been melted away from the top. The gold has a dull finish, but has evidently been so well cared for, or else restored in such a way that it presents a surprisingly new appearance. There are eight stones, four on either side, representing the nails in a horse's shoe; two diamonds, two emeralds, two very pale sapphires, and two rubies. Around the upper half of the semi-circle, and just under the stones is the Latin inscription, *Sic jurat transcendere montes*. On the back of the shoe is engraved S.B.S. to W.R.S. You will immediately note that the Latin verb is spelled with an "r" instead of a "v."⁸⁰

The surprise here is that of the change in verb-forms, which alters the meaning to read, "Thus does he *swear* to cross the mountains," rather than (with *jurat*, which the Beach pin possesses) "Thus does

⁷⁸ Miss Beach to the writer, November 7, 1946. Charles Campbell, the historian, was a great-grandson of Bernard Moore. Writing to Lyman C. Draper on June 15, 1849, Campbell says of Moore: "As to his having been one of Gov. Spotswood's exploring party, that is only fiction or at best conjecture. There is no such tradition among his descendants. . . ." See Lester J. Cappon, *loc. cit.*, p. 92. It is in this connection significant that, despite Campbell's information, Bernard Moore's name appears in the list of Caruthers' thirty-two gentry who are awarded a shoe. Moore has a minor role in *The Knights*.

⁷⁹ For a description and photograph, see Katherine L. Warren, "Local Woman Owns Copy of Spotswood Golden Pin," *Richmond News Leader*, September 21, 1943. The Latin inscription is on the inner rim of this horseshoe.

⁸⁰ Mrs. James B. Stone to the writer, November 23, 1946. For a newspaper account of this shoe, with a photographic enlargement, see Clara Beverley Whitehead, "Horseshoe Pin May Be a Spotswood Original," *Richmond News Leader*, Monday, March 3, 1947.

he rejoice to cross the mountains." On the face of it, the likelihood would seem to be in favor of swearing rather than rejoicing, since in 1716 such a journey as Spotswood led connoted hardships, if not dangers; and it is likely that only a minority of enthusiasts among the Knights genuinely "rejoiced" to join the Governor in his intrepid penetration of the unknown. Nevertheless, both tradition in general, and the earliest sources and better historians in particular, support the *juvat* form.⁸¹

In closing, we should note certain nonliterary manifestations of the vitality of the Horseshoe legend. In 1909 the schoolteachers of Rockingham County personated Spotswood and his Knights in a Fourth of July pageant.⁸² In 1921 the citizens of Fredericksburg, as part of their town's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration, included in the municipal parade a float depicting the Knights.⁸³ In this same year, too, the Virginia chapter of the Colonial Dames of America erected a stone cairn at Swift Run Gap, on what is now the Skyline Drive, in commemoration of Spotswood's having, at that approximate point, first described the Valley of the Shenandoah. During the pageant week of Virginia history, which was staged at Richmond in May, 1922, an episode from the Knights' story was acted out by members of the American Legion. In 1931 the wife of a physician at Upperville, in the fox-hunting country, opened an antique shop in that town and named it The Golden Horse Shoe, "which has a nice sound, don't you think?"⁸⁴ Presumably concurring

⁸¹ The *juvat* usage is espoused by J. Lewis Peyton, *History of Augusta County, Virginia* (Staunton, 1882), p. 24, and by J. E. Norris, ed., *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley: Counties of Frederick, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Clarke* (Chicago, 1890), pp. 49-50. On the other hand, the *juvat* form is approved by the one-time State Librarian of Virginia, William Wallace Scott, in his *History of Orange County*, p. 101, where he calls the form *juvat* "careless," and by Charles E. Kemper, who cites in evidence an eighteenth-century document of colonial New York; see Kemper, ed., "Early Westward Movement of Virginia," *VMHB*, XIII (July, 1905), 125 n., and Kemper, ed., "The Settlement of the Valley," *VMHB*, XXX (April, 1922), 171. Also approving *juvat* are Bruce, *op. cit.*; Rothery, *Maryland and Virginia Roundabout*; and Julia Davis, *The Shenandoah, Rivers of America Series* (New York, 1945), pp. 26-30. W. H. T. Squires, *Through Centuries Three: A Short History of the People of Virginia* (Portsmouth, 1929), p. 258 n., observes that the *juvat* form is "sometimes" found. The truth of this is interestingly exhibited in the following citations: John Esten Cooke, in his children's book, *Stories of the Old Dominion*, p. 92, employs *juvat*, but corrects the error in his *Virginia: A History of the People* (Boston and New York, 1911), p. 315. R. A. Brock, one-time secretary of the Virginia Historical Society, displays a serene impartiality in two articles contributed to *Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia . . . Special Virginia Edition* (New York, 1884), pp. 312 and 341, wherein he employs both verb forms with equal aplomb. A variation on this theme is provided by Coatsworth in *The Golden Horseshoe*, p. 151, where *juvat* is employed, but is translated as "swear!"

⁸² The pageant, which was presented at a summer session of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, is described and photographed in Wayland, *op. cit.*, p. 427.

⁸³ John T. Goolrick, *Historic Fredericksburg* (Richmond, 1922), p. 194.

⁸⁴ Mrs. Fred Gochbauer, proprietor of The Golden Horse Shoe, to the writer, December 11, 1946. Mrs. Gochbauer admitted she had never heard of Caruthers or his novel.

in this opinion were the proprietors of The Golden Horseshoe, a roadside tavern for Negroes just off U.S. 1, between Richmond and Petersburg, and the retired Naval officer who, in July, 1948, opened The Golden Horseshoe Tourist Camp on U.S. 33 west of Stanardsville, at the foot of the Blue Ridge, leading up to Swift Run Gap.⁸⁸

Just how much the influence of Caruthers' novel has contributed to this persistence of interest in Spotswood and his expedition is a nice conjecture, perhaps never to be answered accurately. One thing, however, seems certain. When, on the past page of his book, the novelist penned the following paragraph—

Western Virginia should erect some enduring monument of the memory of the far-sighted statesman and gallant soldier who first discovered that noble country.

—he, a western Virginian, had, all unsuspecting, just completed that monument in the pages of *The Knights of the Golden Horse-Shoe*.

Baltimore, Maryland

⁸⁸ Captain R. D. Lyon, U.S.N. (Ret.) to the writer, August 31, 1949. Capt. Lyon had not heard of Caruthers or his novel.

FREDERICK THE GREAT AND THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

By FREDERICK A. KLEMM

Frederick the Great, who was ruler of Prussia during Germany's literary ascendancy, bears the reputation of being strongly opposed to the German language. Certainly his own pronouncements and actions would seem to leave little doubt in this respect. It is strange that so nationalistic and, in some ways, so enlightened a monarch should disregard the language and culture of his subjects to such an extent that he discounted the renowned figures of Klopstock, Lessing, Kant, Winckelmann, Herder, Wieland, and Goethe, and patronized French men of letters such as Voltaire, Pernety, Maupertuis, Lambert, D'Alembert, and a host of others who, with few exceptions, were decidedly inferior in comparison. As an advocate of learning he furthered the development of the Berlin Academy of Science, but attached to it the condition that all contributions in German must be translated into French before presentation.¹ And in 1780 he published an essay, *De la Littérature Allemande*, which reads in part:

Je trouve une langue à demi-barbare, qui se divise en autant de dialectes différents que l'Allemagne contient de provinces. Chaque cercle se persuade que son patois est le meilleur. Il n'existe point encore de recueil muni de la sanction nationale, où l'on trouve un choix de mots et de phrases qui constitue la pureté du langage. Ce qu'on écrit en Suabe n'est pas intelligible à Hambourg, et le style d'Autriche parait obscur en Saxe. Il est donc physiquement impossible qu'un auteur doué du plus beau génie puisse supérieurement bien manier cette langue brute.²

And further:

Commençons par la langue Allemande, laquelle j'accuse d'être diffuse, difficile à manier, peu sonore, et qui manque de plus de cette abondance de termes métaphoriques si nécessaires pour fournir des tours nouveaux, et pour donner des grâces aux langues polies.³

That Frederick completely misunderstood the true character of the German literature developing under his very eyes need scarcely be mentioned.⁴

From other sources we learn the same story regarding the status of the German language at the court. Voltaire writes shortly after

¹ Norwood Young, *Life of Frederick the Great* (New York, 1919), p. 369.

² *Œuvres Posthumes de Frédéric II, Roi de Prusse* (Berlin, 1789), XIII, 377.

³ *Ibid.*, XIII, 390.

⁴ Friedrich Gundolf, *Friedrichs des Großen Schrift über die deutsche Literatur* (Zürich, 1947), p. 9, attempts to explain Frederick's inability to recognize the importance of contemporary German literature by saying that the Prussian king had formulated his opinions a generation earlier, at a time when the criticisms were largely justified, and that he was too inflexible to permit himself to develop beyond this point.

his arrival in the Prussian capital: "Je me trouve ici en France. On ne parle que notre langue. L'Allemand est pour les soldats et pour les chevaux; il n'est nécessaire que pour la route."⁵

Thomas Carlyle, in his standard biography of Frederick the Great, is more lenient, although still decidedly negative, regarding the Prussian king's use of German:

From all manner of sources . . . he learned . . . the corrupt, Prussian dialect of German, and used the same all his days among his soldiers, native officials, common subjects, and wherever it was most convenient; speaking it, and writing and misspelling it with great freedom, though always with a certain aversion and undisguised contempt.⁶

Recently some new material regarding Frederick's use of German has become available in the form of the unpublished correspondence between the Prussian court and our young government during the days of the American Revolution.⁷ A commission in Paris, headed by Benjamin Franklin, sent representatives to Berlin in a partially successful effort to enlist the aid of the Prussian monarch in the American cause. The resulting diplomatic correspondence and all the notes and memoranda pertaining thereto consist of 140 items covering the period from July, 1776, to June, 1783. It therefore may be assumed to represent a cross section of the diplomatic correspondence of the Prussian court for seven years and may be regarded as typical of all the diplomatic correspondence of the court during this time insofar as language and style are concerned.

In classifying the 140 items, we find that eighty-seven passed between the Americans and the Prussian court. These are all in French, or in English with French translations, for the American representatives preferred to write in English and then have the letters translated, frequently forwarding both the original and the translation. Twenty-five more are intracourt communications, but not to or from the king. Of these, fourteen are in French and eleven in German. The remaining twenty-eight are exchanges between Frederick and his prime minister Schulenburg. Of these, fifteen are from Schulenburg to Frederick and are all in French, although Schulenburg wrote most of his other intracourt communications in German. This would lead to the assumption that Schulenburg thought it politic or had actually been instructed to use French when he wrote to Frederick. Of the thirteen from Frederick to Schulenburg, however, nine are in French and four in German, despite the fact that those in German are replies to Schulenburg's French letters. Furthermore, Frederick, in order to save time, sometimes wrote a few lines on the margin of an incoming Schulenburg letter.

⁵ Adolf Stahr, *G. E. Lessing: Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Berlin, 1859), I, 257.

⁶ Thomas Carlyle, *History of Frederick the Second called Frederick the Great* (New York, 1858), I, 298.

⁷ This material, in the form of photostatic copies, is in the University of Pennsylvania Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

burg letter and then returned it to his prime minister. In two cases out of six of this nature, the marginal notes on the French letter are in German.

The following is a typical example of a letter written in German by Frederick to Schulenburg. Although most of the court correspondence was obviously dictated and then written in official form by a calligrapher, this particular letter is entirely in Frederick's own handwriting, probably because he was with his army on maneuvers at the time.

Extract eines König. Cabinets ordre d.d. Lager vor Jaromir den 30. July 1778.

Mein lieber Etats Minister Freiherr von der Schulenburg.

Was die Americaner betrifft habt Ihr selbigen nur das wieder zu schreiben was Ich schon 10. mall gesagt, nemlich Ich hätte keine Flotte und so könnte mich darauf nicht einlassen und auch meine Hafens nicht decken und also nicht erlauben dass fremde Schiffe in meine Hafens einliefen, denn sie würden gleich enlvert werden von ihren Feinden ohne dass es verhindert werden könnte. Das wäre also gar keine Sach für Mich. Überhaupt müsset Ihr nur sehen, auf eine höffliche Arth sie abzuweisen.

Ich bin übrigens Euer wohl affectionirter König.

Friedrich

This is not unacceptable German according to eighteenth-century standards. Aside from the loan word *enlevirt* and the plural form *Hafens*, the letter might have been written by any German of the time. The deviations from modern spelling and punctuation are not unusual for the period. The style, although by no means literary, bespeaks a fluency and naturalness of expression, and the meaning is anything but ambiguous. Frederick uses the capitalized form of *Ich*, possibly as an intermediate stage one step removed from the traditional royal *Wir*. In the objective form of the same, however, he is not consistent, using *Mich* on one occasion and *mich* on another. The possessive adjective *meine* remains uncapitalized.

The letter, including the signature, is entirely in German script except for the words *Extract*, *Cabinets ordre*, *Jaromir*, *July*, *Etats Minister*, *Schulenburg*, and *Americaner*, which are in Latin script except for the last letter of *Americaner* where Frederick lapses into a German script *r*. The complimentary ending, which is likewise used in the other letters by the king, is especially interesting in view of the fact that the unnamed king in Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* signs his letter to Tellheim as follows: "Ich bin Euer wohlaffectionierter König."⁸ Lessing, while serving as General Tauentzien's secretary in Breslau during the Seven Years' War, undoubtedly saw Frederick's signature on many occasions.

An example of a German marginal note written by Frederick is found on a calligraphed communication in French from Schulenburg to the king dated September 6, 1777, regarding an American repre-

⁸ Lessings *Werke* (Leipzig und Vienna: Bibliographisches Institut, n. d.), II, 194.

sentative's proposal to allow American ships to enter Prussian harbors under certain conditions. On this occasion Frederick wrote informally: "Das gehet nicht an er will in unsere Havens ein laufen das ist ihm schon abgeschlagen Fr." This communication, again in German script, gives the impression of being hastily, actually carelessly written, with no attempt at punctuation. The spelling of *Havens* differs from the occurrence of *Hafens* in the above quoted letter, but otherwise the texts show no inconsistencies.

An evaluation of this new material presents the following results:

(1) The language of intracourt correspondence at the court of Frederick the Great is nearly equally divided between French and German.

(2) Prime Minister Schulenburg always used French in writing to the king.

(3) Frederick answered Schulenburg's correspondence in either French or German, using French approximately twice as often as German.

(4) Frederick wrote marginal notes on Schulenburg's French letters, again at a ratio of two in French to one in German.

(5) Frederick used predominantly German script when writing in German, and his German style does not differ materially from the nonliterary norms of the day.

From this evidence one may conclude that, although Frederick the Great was exceedingly partial to the French language, he frequently used German for no apparent reason. Indeed, he did so in circumstances which would seem to demand the continued use of French. This would indicate that his affinity with the German language was greater than has hitherto been revealed and that he did not use it "always with a certain aversion and undisguised contempt," as Carlyle reports.

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GOETHE AND CANNING

By JOHN HENNIG

The news of George Canning's death produced an immense sensation, not only in his country but throughout Europe, where his name stood for freedom and all that was liberal in the true sense of the word.

In France a medal was struck in his memory with the inscription "A George Canning toute la nation française."¹

An unexpected illustration of this statement (which concludes the largest biography of Canning hitherto published) is found in the references which Goethe made to George Canning. His interest in Canning during the latter's lifetime is testified to by Eckermann. Chapter "1827" of the *Gespräche* begins with the following entry for January 3:

Heute bei Tische sprachen wir über Cannings treffliche Rede für Portugal. "Es gibt Leute," sagte Goethe, "die diese Rede grob nennen; aber diese Leute wissen nicht, was sie wollen, es liegt in ihnen eine Sucht, alles Große zu frondieren. Es ist keine Opposition, sondern eine bloße Frondation. Sie müssen etwas Großes haben, das sie hassen können. . . . Cannings Rede für Portugal ist das Produkt eines großen Bewußtseins. Er fühlt sehr gut den Umfang seiner Gewalt und die Größe seiner Stellung, und er hat recht, daß er spricht, wie er empfindet. Aber das können diese Sansculotten nicht begreifen, und was uns andern groß erscheint, erscheint ihnen grob."

This judgment of Goethe's on the speech which Canning, in his capacity of Foreign Secretary, had given on December 12, 1826,² shows not only his close knowledge of British politics and parliamentary debates, but also his insight into the deeper significance of the political movements of his age. Canning's masterly defense of the Government's decision to prevent Spain from interfering in Portugal was mainly directed against his former friends.³ Goethe was far ahead of most of his contemporaries in his appreciation of Canning's versatility. Moreover, he realized that the true conflict in European affairs went right through the superficial front of reaction versus progress. To Goethe's mind, the great individual has to break through such superficial fronts to the true realities of the historical situation. He was revolted by the sight of the vital powers of the world being hampered by inferior opponents.

Watching the "unrelenting hostility through which the session of 1827 was made so bitter to Canning by his former friends,"⁴ Goethe

¹ Joceline Bagot, *Canning and His Friends* (London, 1909), II, 437. The Index to Charles Petrie, *George Canning* (London, 1946), refers to "Goethe, William" (!), an immaterial reference to Canning's opinion of Goethe.

² See Augustus Granville Stapleton, *Political Life of George Canning* (London, 1831), III, 219 ff.

³ George Edmundson, in *Cambridge Modern History*, X (1907), 319 ff.

⁴ "No mercy was shown to him." P. E. Kebbel, in *DNB*; also H. W. V. Temperley, *Life of Canning* (London, 1905), p. 233 f.

said to Eckermann on July 9 that English political life had thereby become inferior to that of France. In the British Parliament, he felt, there were at that time

gegeneinander wirkende gewaltige Kräfte, die sich paralysieren, und wo die große Einsicht eines einzelnen Mühe hat durchzudringen, wie wir an Canning und den vielen Quengeleien sehen, die man diesem großen Staatsmanne macht.

Less than a month later, four months after he had become Prime Minister, Canning had been brought into the grave by those "Quengeleien." On July 23 Goethe recorded in his diary: "Die Broschüre über die letzte ministerielle Veränderung in England einzeln abgedruckt als Inhalt der verbotenen Stücke des Globe." On August 13, five days after Canning's death at Chiswick,⁵ Goethe entered in his diary: "Herr Canzler v. Müller. Der Tod des Ministers Canning beschäftigt das ganze Publicum wie billig." According to v. Müller, it was on August 12 that Goethe "sprach viel von Cannings Tod." On this occasion, v. Müller reports, Goethe made a statement most significant for his philosophy of history:

Man heftet sich klügelnd bei solchen folgereichen Vorfällen an die Einzelheiten vermeintlicher Ursachen.⁶ Darin liegt es nicht; es mußte so kommen,⁷ wenn auch das Einzelne anders geschehen wäre.

Here again Goethe was ahead of his age. As late as 1907 Professor H. W. V. Temperley wrote:

The tragedy of [Canning's] death and the dazzling qualities of his genius have blinded historians to the fact that . . . the death of this extraordinary man was inopportune either for his country or his fame.⁸

On August 31, when Ottilie and her sister Ulricke, August, Gans, Eckermann, and others dined with Goethe

der Umstand, daß mehrere Male Engländer angemeldet wurden, die im "Erbprinzen" abgestiegen waren und Frau v. Goethe die Aufwartung machen wollten, brachte das Hauptgespräch auf England.

Gans was requested to tell of his sojourn in England.

Sitten und Eigenthümlichkeiten der Engländer wurden geschildert, und da Canning gerade vor einem halben Monat gestorben war, so gab sein Leben und sein Ende Veranlassung, ihn mit Pitt und dem Vater, Lord Chatam, zu vergleichen. Goethe sprach von dem älteren Pitt mit Bewunderung und meinte, es sei doch in diesen alten englischen Staatsmännern mehr Lebenskraft und Ausdauer wie in den jetzigen gewesen. Ob dieses nun in den Personen oder eigentlicher in den Verhältnissen liege, wurde jetzt besprochen, und ich war der Meinung, daß es nicht wunderbar erscheinen dürfe, wenn Cannings Lebens-

⁵ For this day, Goethe entered "Herr Canzler v. Müller."

⁶ "His struggles against a combination of difficulties, peculiarly trying to one of his warm and sensitive disposition, did not require to be aggravated by bodily sickness." Keibel, *loc. cit.*

⁷ Did Goethe think of Luther's translation of Luke 24:26?

⁸ *Cambridge Modern History*, X, 592.

kraft durch gebieterische Umstände und durch nicht zu vermeidende Intriguen gebrochen worden sei. Obgleich Goethe selbst mir nicht uneingeschränkt für die Engländer zu sein schien, so lobte er doch die Zartheit ihrer Formen [references follow to DesVoeux's translation of *Tasso* and to Byron].⁹

To this account Biedermann noted:

Nach Gans' Darstellung wäre der 30. August zu setzen, was aber mit den Berichten Partheys and v. Müllers in Widerspruch stehen würde. Vielleicht gibt Goethes Tagebuch—das für "Goethes Gespräche" jetzt unzugänglich ist—einmal Aufschluß.¹⁰

In his diary, Goethe entered for August 30: "Mittags Canzler v. Müller und Dr. Parthey," and for August 31:

Mittags die Sonnabend Gäste und Professor Gans. Derselbe blieb nach Tisch. Mit ihm gar manches über der neuesten deutschen Literatur Wesen und Unwesen.

There is no reason why Goethe should have not spoken on both occasions about Canning. On September 2 he enters in his diary: "In Brans Miscellen über Cannings Administration." The *Miscellen*, one of the numerous periodicals edited by Friedrich A. Bran, "eine vom Publikum viel gelesene und geschätzte Zeitschrift,"¹¹ was for Goethe and many others an important source of information on conditions in England.

Of the "Engländer" who arrived at Weimar by the end of August, we know only John Murray, Sr.,¹² to whose visit Goethe refers on September 1, and who, apparently, like other British visitors, brought a letter of introduction to Ottilie whose Anglomania was well known. On September 6 Goethe refers to a visit of Miss Chambers, the niece of Joseph C. Mellish of Blith, but she had already arrived in June. Whether any of these English visitors brought Goethe further information on Canning, we do not know. Actually there was no need for this—Goethe's high opinion of Canning had been firmly established long before.

When in November, 1827, James Henry Lawrence¹³ returned to

⁹ *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, VIII, 361 f.

¹⁰ *Goethes Gespräche*, VI, 194.

¹¹ *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, III, 235; Goethe's *Tagebuch*, July 14, 1821, November 27, 1831, etc. On Goethe's relations with Bran see my paper on "Goethe and Hüttner" to be published in *Modern Language Review*. A biographical sketch on Canning appeared in Bran's *Minerva*, IV (1823), 332-40, and comments on his speeches, *ibid.*, III, 260-345 (both items translated from the French).

¹² The compilers of the Index to Goethe's *Tagebücher* doubted whether this was Murray Sr. (II) or Jr. (III); however, the latter expressly stated that it was "in 1829 that I first set foot on the Continent" (*DNB*, and *John Murray III*, by John Murray IV [London, 1919], 9).

¹³ R. C. Alford, in *Publications of the English Goethe Society*, V (1890), 192. I do not know why Landgraf, *Goethe und seine ausländischen Besucher* (München, 1932), pp. 41 f. and 51, assumed that it was James Henry's brother who presented Goethe with the bust of Canning. Of this brother Goethe said on October 26, 1829 (diary) that he "uns seit 9 Jahren nicht besucht hatte." In

Weimar after one and a half years absence,¹⁴ he was sure to please Goethe by presenting him with "Cannings kleiner Büste" (*Tagebuch*, November 10). Three days after receiving this gift he showed it to the Grand Duchess, and on November 15, when Hofrath Meyer dined with him, the subject of conversation was "die Canningsche Büste und sonstige Kunstwerke." The most extensive description of Lawrence's present is found in the letter which Goethe wrote on the following day to Adele Schopenhauer, who shared the Anglomania of Ottilie v. Goethe, her friend. This letter shows us the close connection between Goethe's interest in English politics and his personal relations with Englishmen:

Zum Heil unserer tanzenden Lieblinge sind weitere Engländer angelangt. Indem sie bey Hofe begünstigt figuriren, weiß ich noch nicht, ob einer oder der andere schon capturirt ist oder wer Anstalt macht, diesen oder jenen sich anzueignen. Der alte treue Lawrence ist wieder angekommen, man behandelt ihn ohne Consequenz und macht daher von allen Seiten offne Jagd auf ihn.¹⁵ Wie und wo er sich bestimmen oder klüglich vielfache Gunst vorzuziehen geneigt seyn wird, davon wüßt ich noch nichts zu sagen.

Bey mir hat er sich besonders insinuiert, indem er ein aus Alabaster geschnittenes Bildniß Cannings, unter Glasglocke, in rothsammet gefüttertem Futteral,¹⁶ aufmerksam anständig verehrte; es ist zugleich ein allerdings lobenswürdiges Kunstwerklein und eine sehr erfreuliche Erinnerung an dieses edle Bild, welches auch frühzeitig und voreilig zu Staub geworden.

The reference which Goethe's diary made on November 13 to Canning's bust is followed by the words "Walter Scotts Brief,"¹⁷ which Goethe apparently showed the Grand Duchess on the same occasion. Then, Goethe writes: "Für mich im *Globe*." A few weeks earlier Goethe had read in the *Globe* that Baron Pierre Charles François Dupin, the French economist,¹⁸ planned to strike a medal in memory of Canning and invited subscription to it. On October 12 Goethe wrote to the baron:

Voudriez vous avoir la complaisance de faire noter a l'expediteur du *Globe* ma souscription pour dix exemplaires a cinq francs pour la medaille intentionee.

In the German Entwurf¹⁹ to this letter Goethe said more expressly that he wished "mit einigen Freunden zu dem großen Unternehmen mitzuwirken." By the end of the subsequent year Goethe had not yet

Goethe Jahrbuch, XIX (1898), 101, Geiger stated that the Canning bust was still preserved in the *Urbinszimmer* of the Goethe-Haus at Weimar.

¹⁴ Goethe's *Tagebücher*, X, 294.

¹⁵ William R. Swifte, who had left Weimar in July, gives a lively description of this "offne Jagd" in his autobiography, *Wilhelm's Wanderings* (London, 1878). Lawrence was then fifty-four years old.

¹⁶ As in his conversation with Eckermann of January 3, when Goethe had compared Canning with Napoleon, we may think of the famous glass bust of Napoleon which was a source of inspiration for his theory of colors.

¹⁷ See Grierson's valuable note in his edition of *Letters of Sir Walter Scott* (London, 1936), X, 249.

¹⁸ *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, XV (1856), 316 ff. Dupin had repeatedly been in England.

¹⁹ *Briefe*, Weimar edition, XLIII, 345.

heard any more of this business. On December 6, 1828, he wrote to Carl Jügel, the Frankfurt bookseller, to ask

wie weit es mit der Medaille des Herrn Canning, welche in Frankreich geprägt werden soll, gekommen ist? Ich habe auf zehn Exemplare unmittelbar bei Herrn Baron Dupin unterzeichnet, bisher aber noch nichts weiter davon vernommen. Da nun aber das Gerücht läuft, sie sey schon hervorgetreten, so werden die hiesigen Theilnehmer ungeduldig, und ich wünschte sie beruhigen zu können.

Confirming Jügel's reply of December 23, Goethe wrote on December 29:

Daß ich auf zehn Exemplare der Canningschen Medaille subscribirt aber nicht pränumerirt habe; deshalb denn bitte: gedachte Exemplare, durch Ihren Correspondenten, gegen die Gebühr (ich glaube 5 Francs das Stück) in Empfang nehmen zu lassen.

At the same time, Goethe planned to write once more to Dupin directly. In the German Entwurf to this letter he spoke of the medal as "dieses dem vortrefflichen Manne bestimmte Denkmal."²⁰

The anxiety shown by Goethe and his friends to secure copies of this memorial medal bears out the statement with which Augustus Granville Stapleton, Canning's secretary, concluded the biography of his master: "He died deeply lamented by foreign nations."²¹ Whether the German subscribers eventually received their copies of the medal which "toute la nation française"²² dedicated to the memory of George Canning, Goethe's repeated inquiries on this subject show the lasting interest he took in Canning. With reference to the July Revolution, Goethe wrote—on August 9, 1830—to E. C. A. v. Gersdorff:

[Ich] erwehrt mich nicht der Erinnerung an jene, wie es damals schien frevelhafte Äußerung Cannings, welche doch dahin deutete, es komme nur auf eine Anregung an, so wäre der ganze Norden in Revolution gesetzt.

This last statement may be linked with Goethe's earliest known reference to Canning. In his "treffliche Rede für Portugal," Canning had spoken the prophetic words:

I dread war from an apprehension of the tremendous consequences which might arise from any hostilities in which we might now be engaged. Some years ago, in the discussion of the negotiations respecting the French war against Spain, I took the liberty of adverting to this topic. . . . I said that I feared that the next war which should be kindled in Europe would be a war not so much of armies as of opinions. . . . Behold my apprehensions realised!²³

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²⁰ *Idem*. See also *Goethe Jahrbuch*, XIII (1892), 112 f.

²¹ Canning (London, 1859), p. 606.

²² A French translation of Canning's speeches appeared in two volumes in 1832. Kebbel, *loc. cit.*

²³ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, III, 222.

OSCAR WILDE, STEFAN GEORGE, HELIOGABALUS*

By VICTOR A. OSWALD, JR.

In Gundolf's discourse on the inception of Stefan George's *Algabal*, after he has identified the protagonist of the lyric cycle as "a symbol of omnipotence, consecration, beauty, and unfettered imagination,"¹ he goes on to say: "Naturally, George did not leaf about to find this generally appropriate symbol; his soul, ripe for the symbol and pregnant with form, struck like a divining-rod when he encountered it."² The language is rhapsodic, but the implication is unmistakable: the inception of *Algabal* coincides with the moment of George's first cognizance³ of Heliogabalus. This can hardly have been earlier than the period when he was putting the finishing touches to *Pilgerfahrten*, in the late summer or early autumn of 1891,⁴ and hardly later than the winter of 1891-1892, when, after his brush with von Hofmannsthal in Vienna, he returned to Paris.⁵ *Algabal* was finished in Paris early in the summer of 1892.⁶

This was the era of triumph for the movement of symbolism and decadence.⁷ Its journals flourished in Paris and even in the provinces. Its adherents poured forth their verse in an apparently inexhaustible stream.⁸ Its gods, Verlaine and Mallarmé, had risen from neglect and oblivion to fame and acclamation.⁹ Mallarmé's Tuesdays, to which the faithful few had resorted for years, became a center of attraction.

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¹ Friedrich Gundolf, *George* (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1920), p. 81: "... ein einheitliches Gleichnis der Allmacht, der Weihe, der Schönheit und der Traumfreiheit." (Unless the contrary is indicated in the notes, the author is responsible for translations within the text.)

² *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82. "Selbstverständlich hat George dies rundum gemäße Symbol sich nicht erblüht, sondern die symbolreife und formtrachtige Seele schlug wünschelrutenhaft an, als es ihr begegnete."

³ I have used the word "cognizance" with deliberation. It is most unlikely that George, as a student of the humanities, should not have read of or heard of Heliogabalus before this time.

⁴ *Pilgerfahrten* had gone to press when George first met Hugo von Hofmannsthal in November of 1891. Cf. Friedrich Wolters, *Stefan George* (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1930), p. 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34. The dating of the last letter from George to Hofmannsthal at the time of their first encounter is: "Wien, donnerstag auf freitag, 14./15. jan. 1892." Cf. *Briefwechsel zwischen George und Hofmannsthal* (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1938), p. 16.

⁶ Wolters, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-37.

⁷ "1891, c'est la date heureuse du Symbolisme. C'est sa phase héroïque. . . ." Ernest Raynaud, *La Mêle Symboliste* (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 1920), II, 5 ff.

⁸ Raynaud lists no less than twenty-three major publications for the year 1891. Cf. *op. cit.*, II, 179-80.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6. "L'aventure de Verlaine et de Stéphane Mallarmé est unique dans l'histoire littéraire. Ce n'étaient pas des poètes méconnus qu'un gloire soudaine sortait de l'ombre. C'étaient des poètes oubliés."

Mondor writes: "From 1891 on, the Tuesdays came to have their definitive character . . .";¹⁰ and, after he has furnished a list of illustrious French visitors, he cites the names of those from abroad: "Whistler, Symons, Brandes, Stefan George, Oscar Wilde. . .".¹¹

For Oscar Wilde, too, this was an era of triumph. *The Happy Prince* had appeared in 1888; *The Portrait of Mr. W. H.*, *Pen, Pencil, and Poison*, *The Decay of Lying* in 1889; *The Critic as Artist*, and, as a magazine story, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in 1890. In April of 1891 *Dorian Gray* was republished as a book; in May of 1891 the collected essays appeared under the title, *Intentions*. In the winter of 1891-1892 it was the talk of Paris that Wilde "had written a drama in French called *Salomé*, and at once it was put out that Sarah Bernhardt was going to produce it in London."¹² Wilde came to Paris in 1891 in a blaze of glory that had not yet begun to fade into notoriety. Sherard writes of him:

During the same year [1891] we frequently met in Paris, where he had now begun to be counted, and seriously, amongst European celebrities. In December he was much feted in the best houses, and leading littérateurs and artists crowded to his hotel. The Princess of Monaco, sending him her portrait at that time, wrote upon it "Au vrai Art—à Oscar Wilde."¹³

The French tradition is even more emphatic. As Lemonnier puts it: "Wilde charmed almost all the symbolists and decadents. The author of *Dorian Gray* was in their eyes the leading figure in England of a movement comparable to theirs."¹⁴ He goes on to speak of "this triumphal journey to Paris . . . this epoch of festival occasions . . . of banquets given by poets and men of letters in honor of the author of *The Picture*."¹⁵

In spite of Mondor's juxtaposition of the names Stefan George, Oscar Wilde, I have found no evidence that the two men encountered each other in these days at Mallarmé's, or, for matter of that, anywhere else. We know that George went from Vienna to England and France in the late summer months of 1891; that he returned to Vienna in autumn of that year; that he set out for Paris in January of 1892.¹⁶ Wilde seems to have been in Paris off and on throughout this period, but the only definite dates I have been able to find are

¹⁰ Henri Mondor, *Vie de Mallarmé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), p. 624: "les Mardis vont avoir, à partir de 1891, leur physionomie définitive. . .".

¹¹ *Idem*.

¹² Frank Harris, *Oscar Wilde: His Life and Confessions* (New York: Covici, Friede, 1930), p. 87.

¹³ R. H. Sherard, *Oscar Wilde* (London: Greening and Co., 1905), p. 109.

¹⁴ Leon Lemonnier, *La Vie d'Oscar Wilde* (Paris: Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1931), p. 86. "Wilde séduisait à peu près tous les symbolistes et les décadents. L'auteur de *Dorian Gray* était pour eux le chef, en Angleterre, d'un mouvement semblable au leur."

¹⁵ *Idem*. " . . . ce voyage triomphal à Paris. C'était la belle époque des fêtes dans les halls princiers du quartier du Trocadéro et des banquets de poètes et d'hommes de lettres offerts et donnés en l'honneur de l'auteur du *Portrait*."

¹⁶ Cf. Wolters, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-35.

April, 1891,¹⁷ and December, 1891.¹⁸ However, though George may not have had occasion to meet—or even to see—Wilde in his hour of glory, there can be no doubt that he heard of his triumphal appearance in Paris. André Gide wrote of Wilde in 1891: "As soon as he arrived in Paris his name was on everyone's lips. . . . I heard him spoken of at Mallarmé's . . . and I was eager to meet him."¹⁹ Wilde's name was on everyone's lips.²⁰ He was a subject of conversation at Mallarmé's, where George had visited from time to time ever since his introduction to Mallarmé in 1889.²¹ Above all, Wilde was an intimate friend of Stuart Merrill, who had met him in London in 1890²² and who played Virgil to Wilde's Dante through the various circles of symbolism and decadence in 1891²³—Stuart Merrill, whom George had known since 1889,²⁴ who reëncountered George in Germany some time during these years,²⁵ and from whose work George published a translation in the first series of the *Blätter für die Kunst*.²⁶

The question of whether George did or did not see Wilde at this time; the fact that George must have heard of Wilde's march of triumph through the salons, the cafes, the *cénacles* of Paris—these would appear at first glance to be of no more than casual interest, marginal jottings to the literary history of the Nineties. There is nothing in the Georgian tradition or in scholarly studies of Wilde's influence in Germany²⁷ to indicate that George ever took interest in Wilde or in Wilde's works.²⁸ He never so much as translated one of his poems. But what if the celebrated author of *Dorian Gray* had furnished the symbol that made George's divining rod bend?

¹⁷ Cf. Coulson Kernahan, *In Good Company* (London: The Bodley Head, 1917), p. 212.

¹⁸ Cf. Sherard, *Oscar Wilde*, p. 259.

¹⁹ André Gide, "Oscar Wilde," *L'Ermitage*, Treizième Année, No. 6 (June, 1902), p. 403. "A Paris, sitôt qu'il y vint, son nom courut de bouche en bouche. . . . J'en entendis parler chez Mallarmé . . . et je souhaitai le connaître. . . ."

²⁰ A partial list of men who can be shown to have known both George and Wilde in these days may be illuminating: Stéphane Mallarmé, Stuart Merrill, André Gide, Henri de Regnier, Ernest Raynaud, Jean Moréas, Adolphe Retté, Raymond La Tailhède, Maurice du Plessys, Pierre Louys.

²¹ Cf. Albert Mockel, "Quelque Souvenirs sur Stefan George," *Revue d'Allemagne*, No. 13-14 (Novembre-Décembre, 1928), especially pp. 389 ff.

²² Cf. Marjorie Louise Henry, *Stuart Merrill*, "Bibliothèque de la Revue de Littérature Comparée," Tome 34 (Paris: Champion, 1927), p. 66.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

²⁴ Cf. Mockel, *loc. cit.*, p. 387.

²⁵ *Idem*. "Au café François Ier . . . le plus assidu de tous . . . ce fut le noble et généreux Stuart Merrill qui devait, par la suite, retrouver Stefan George en Allemagne."

²⁶ Cf. Wolters, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

²⁷ Cf. Rudolf Defieber, *Oscar Wilde: Der Mann und sein Werk im Spiegel der deutschen Kritik und sein Einfluß auf die deutsche Literatur*, Heidelberg dissertation (Heidelberg: Druck der Heidelberger Verlagsanstalt und Druckerei, 1934).

²⁸ I do not believe the idea of a derivative influence of Wilde upon George has ever been seriously entertained, except in the cluttered mind of Edouard Roditi (*Oscar Wilde* [Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions Books, 1947]), and I have no idea where he has acquired the idea that "Gide and Stefan George, both . . . acclaimed Wilde as one of their masters" (p. 2). He further writes of "such

II

The equation *fin de siècle: fin de l'empire* came to be a commonplace of the age of symbolism and decadence.²⁹ Verlaine wrote: "I am the Empire at the end of its decadence, watching the tall white barbarians pass by, as I compose idle acrostics with a golden stylus where the sun's languor dances."³⁰ And Mallarmé's *Plainte d'Automne* expresses the thought and the mood as well as they were ever expressed:

Ever since Maria has left me to go to another star . . . I have loved solitude . . . I can say that I have passed long days alone with my cat and, alone, with one of the last authors of the Roman decadence. . . . The literature from which my soul will seek delight is the dying poetry of the last moments of Rome. . . .³¹

As for Des Esseintes, in Huysmans' *A Rebours*, only with Lucan did he begin to be interested in the Latin language. His favorites were Petronius and Apuleius, but he was also fond of certain passages of Tertullian who

had, in fact lived in stormy times, agitated by frightful disorders, under Caracalla, under Macrinus, under the astonishing High Priest of Emesa, Elagabalus, and he tranquilly prepared his sermons . . . while the Roman Empire shook on its foundations. . . . With the utmost sang-froid he recommended carnal abstinence, frugality in food, sobriety in dress, while, walking in silver powder and golden sand, a tiara on his head, his garb figured with precious stones, Elagabalus worked amid his eunuchs, at womanish labor, calling himself the Empress

disciples [of Wilde's] as Stefan George and André Gide" (p. 5); and says that: "In France and Germany, Gide, Stefan George and Hüge [sic] von Hoffmannsthal [sic] were considerably influenced by Wilde's ideas and forms" (p. 225). Unfortunately, Mr. Roditi's journalistic insouciance embraces a critical disdain of bibliography. He says, for instance, rather tiredly, that he "might quote some fifty sources [that he has] consulted for a more ample and scholarly discussion" of the topic of "the taste for medieval Latin poetry displayed by such later Romantics as Baudelaire," but he does not cite any of them; in fact, he makes no citations at all.

²⁹ For some of the references in this section I am indebted to Enid Duthie, *L'Influence du symbolisme français dans le renouveau poétique de l'Allemagne*, "Bibliothèque de la Revue de Littérature Comparée," Tome 91 (Paris: Champion, 1933); others I owe to Marie-Luise Sior, *Stefan George und der französische Symbolismus* (Giessen dissertation, 1932). I have been careful to indicate in parentheses every such indebtedness. I have, of course, consulted the original sources in every case, and most of my citations are from editions different from those cited by Duthie and Sior.

³⁰ Paul Verlaine, *Œuvres Complètes*, Tome I (Paris: Albert Messein, 1925), p. 359. (Cf. Duthie, *op. cit.*, p. 277):

Je suis l'empire à la fin de la décadence
Qui regarde passer les grands Barbares blancs,
En composant des acrostiches indolents
D'un style d'or où la langueur du soleil danse.

³¹ Stéphane Mallarmé, *Divagations* (Paris: Charpentier, 1911), pp. 7-8. First published in *Vogue*, April 11, 1886. (Cf. Duthie, *op. cit.*, p. 277.) "Depuis que Maria m'a quitté pour aller dans une autre étoile . . . j'ai toujours chéri la solitude. . . . Je puis donc dire que j'ai passé de longues journées seul avec mon chat et, seul, avec un des derniers auteurs de la décadence latine. . . . De même la littérature à laquelle mon esprit demande une volupté sera la poésie agonisante des derniers moments de Rome. . . ."

and changing, every night, his Emperor, whom he preferably chose among barbers, scullions and circus drivers. This antithesis delighted him.³²

This antithesis also led a George scholar to conclude that this was the source of inspiration for *Algabal*,³³ but there are, as we shall see, many further possibilities.³⁴

Verlaine, for example, sings: "Even as a child I walked in dreams of Kohinoor, Persian and papal splendor, Heliogabalus and Sardapalus."³⁵ (George, by the way, specifically refers to this passage in his homage to Verlaine,³⁶ as he refers to the prevalent delight in the atmosphere of Roman decadence in his homage to Mallarmé.³⁷) Moreover, Heliogabalus was well established in the consciousness even of the ancestors of the men of the *fin de siècle*, Baudelaire and Gautier. Baudelaire had translated this passage from Poe for his *Nouvelles Histoires Extraordinaires*:

It is certainly a strange place! What is the meaning of yonder singular building? See! it towers above all others and lies to the eastward of what I take to be the royal palace!

That is the new Temple of the Sun, who is adored in Syria under the title of Elah Gabalah. Hereafter a very notorious Roman Emperor will institute this worship in Rome and thence derive a cognomen, Heliogabalus. I daresay you would like to take a peep at the divinity of the temple. You need not look up at the heavens; his Sunship is not there—at least not the Sunship adored by the Syrians. That deity will be found in the interior of yonder building. He is worshipped under the figure of a large stone pillar terminating at the summit on a cone or pyramid, whereby is denoted fire.³⁸

³² This passage is quoted from J. K. Huysmans, *Against the Grain*, translated by John Howard (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1924), pp. 61-62. The original can be found in J. K. Huysmans, *A Rebours* (Paris: Fasquelle, 1884), p. 44. (Cf. Duthie, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-78.)

³³ Cf. H. J. Meessen, "Stefan Georges *Algabal* und die französische *Décadence*," *Monatshefte*, XXXIX (1947), 315.

³⁴ The pursuit of one particularly interesting item was in vain. Gustave Kahn writes in *Symbolistes et Décadents* (Paris: L. Vanier, 1902), pp. 37-38: "On parlait assez couramment, entre autres Paul Adam qui réalisa son désir, de romancer sur Byzance. Jean Richepin, déjà, avait annoncé un *Elagabal*, dont quelques rares fragments parurent au *Courrier français*." (Cf. Sior, *op. cit.*, p. 46.) Mr. Frederick H. Wagman, Director of the Processing Department, Library of Congress, who was so kind as to have a search undertaken for me there (Library of Congress has the only set of *Courrier français* cited in the Union List of Serials), reported that a page by page search through the numbers of the periodical up to 1893 proved fruitless.

³⁵ Paul Verlaine, *op. cit.*, p. 7. (Cf. Sior, *op. cit.*, p. 47):

Tout enfant, j'allais rêvant Ko-Hinnor
Somptuosité persane et papale,
Héliogabale et Sardapale.

³⁶ Stefan George, *Tage und Taten* (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1933) p. 56. "Nach seinen ersten Saturnischen Gedichten wo der jüngling in persischem und päpstlichem prunk sich berauscht. . ."

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53. "Wir wissen noch welchen starken eindruck die schriften der Byzantiner und Spätlateiner in uns hinterließen. . ."

³⁸ Edgar Allan Poe, *Complete Works* (New York: Fred de Fau & Co., 1902), II, 244-45. The Baudelaire version may be consulted in Charles Baudelaire, *Œuvres Complètes* (Paris: Calman Lévy, 1918-19), VI, 278-79.

As for Gautier, in his preface to Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*, which George certainly knew beyond any question as early as 1889,³⁹ the discussion of the introductory poem runs as follows:

The book begins with a poem to the reader, whom the poet [accuses] of having all the vices for which he reproaches others and of cherishing in his heart the great modern monster, Ennui; who . . . dreams . . . of Roman debauchery, a Nero-bureaucrat, a Heliogabalus-shopkeeper.⁴⁰

Most noteworthy of all, however, is a passage from Gautier's novel, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*. The hero, D'Albert, writes to a friend:

I am as weary as if I had gone through all the prodigalities of Sardanapalus . . . Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, great Romans of the Empire . . . I suffer from your disease. . . . I too would build a bridge across the sea and pave the waves; I have dreamed of burning towns to illuminate my festivals; I have wished to be a woman, that I might become acquainted with fresh voluptuousness. Thy gilded house, O Nero! is but a miry stable beside the palace that I have raised; my wardrobe is better equipped than thine, Heliogabalus, and of very different splendor. My circuses are more roaring and more bloody than yours, my perfumes more keen and penetrating, slaves more numerous and better made; I, too, have yoked naked courtesans to my chariot, and I have trodden upon men with a heel as disdainful as yours.⁴¹

Here, as in no other passage in French literature that I have found or to which my attention has been directed, are juxtaposed the elements that comprise the nucleus of *Algabal*: the idea of associating one's personality with that of a Roman emperor and the specific application of the idea to—among others—Heliogabalus. If there is a French source for the *Algabal* conceit, I should say it must be *Mademoiselle de Maupin*.

III

Meanwhile, what of Oscar Wilde? First of all, a few notes on the *Picture of Dorian Gray*. The story's initial appearance was in *Lippincott's Magazine*, No. 271 (London, Philadelphia, July, 1890), pp. 1-100. It was reprinted as a book in April of 1891. George might have heard of it in symbolist circles as early as the autumn of 1890, when he came to Paris from Berlin.⁴² He might have heard of it in England in the summer of 1891.⁴³ He could not have failed to hear of it and of its author in Paris in the summer of 1891 or in the winter of 1891-1892.⁴⁴ It is worth a note in passing that Hofmannsthal, in

³⁹ He was introduced to Mallarmé in that year as a translator of Baudelaire. Cf. Mockel, *loc. cit.*, p. 389, and Albert St. Paul, "Stefan George et le symbolisme français," *Revue d'Allemagne*, No. 13-14, p. 402.

⁴⁰ Baudelaire, *op. cit.*, I, xxviii-xxix. (Cf. Duthie, *op. cit.*, p. 277.)

⁴¹ This passage is quoted from Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, translated by Burton Rascoe (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923), pp. 156-57. The original text can be consulted in Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (Paris: Charpentier, 1919), pp. 154 ff.

⁴² Cf. Wolters, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

a letter of 1892 to Karl August Klein, writes of Wilde as a kindred spirit.⁴⁵

George had a command of English at least as early as 1888, when he made his first trip to London.⁴⁶ There can be no doubt of his ability to have read—and with ease—*Dorian Gray* in the early Nineties. Nor do I think he could have failed to have his attention called, both to the book and to its author, at some time before the end of the winter of 1891-1892. Any assumptions that might be made as to a possible influence of *Mademoiselle de Maupin* or of *A Rebours* on *Algabal* can be made with equal assurance of *Dorian Gray*. And in *Dorian Gray* there is a long and colorful passage in which Dorian revels in the feeling that "he had known them all, those strange, terrible figures that had passed across the stage of the world and made sin so marvelous and evil so full of subtlety. It seemed to him that in some way their lives had been his own."⁴⁷ He is enchanted that the hero of the yellow book,

the wonderful⁴⁸ novel that had so influenced his life had himself had this curious fancy. In a chapter of the book he tells how, crowned with laurel, lest lightning might strike him, he had sat, as Tiberius, in a garden at Capri, reading the shameful books of Elephantis, while dwarfs and peacocks strutted round him and the flute-player mocked the swinger of the censer; and, as Caligula, had caroused with the green-shirted jockeys in their stables, and supped in an ivory manger with a jewel-frontleted horse; and, as Domitian, had wandered through a corridor lined with marble mirrors, looking round with haggard eyes for the reflection of the dagger that was to end his days, and sick with that ennui, that *tedium vitae*, that comes on those to whom life denies nothing; and had peered through a clear emerald at the red shambles of the Circus, and then, in a litter of pearl and purple drawn by silver-shod mules, had been carried through the Street of Pomegranates to a House of Gold, and heard men cry on Nero Caesar as he passed by; and, as Elagabalus, had painted his face with colors, and plied the distaff among the women, and brought the Moon from Carthage, and given her in mystic marriage to the Sun.

We have here, as the reader will promptly realize, an ape of Des Esseintes aping D'Albert.⁴⁹ But we also have, not the essence, but the quintessence of the *Algabal* conceit, and in a book that appeared and was much discussed just when—to get away from Gundolf's divining-rod metaphor—George's compass point was ready for a lodestar.

There is, however, more to be said on our theme. Not merely *Dorian Gray*, but Wilde himself—or the legend of Wilde, or, perhaps, *Dorian Gray* and the legend of Wilde—may well have furnished the

⁴⁵ *Briefwechsel zwischen George und Hoffmannsthal*, p. 53. Hofmannsthal an Klein, Wien, 19. December [1892].

⁴⁶ Wolters, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁴⁷ Oscar Wilde, *Picture of Dorian Gray* (London: Ward Lock and Co., 1891), p. 215.

⁴⁸ It is interesting to note, as a mark of Wilde's reaction to criticism of *Dorian Gray* as immoral and vicious, that this passage runs "this dangerous novel" in the *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* version (p. 76).

⁴⁹ Cf. Bernard Fehr, "Das gelbe Buch in Oscar Wildes *Dorian Gray*," *Englische Studien*, 55. Band (1921), pp. 237 ff.

center of magnetic attraction; for, when Wilde's name was on every tongue in Paris in 1891-1892, some of the tongues called him, among other extravagant names, a reincarnation of a Roman emperor of the days of the decline and fall. Sherard writes of Wilde's appearance as early as 1883: "He had acquired the custom [of having his hair curled] after his return from America and a visit to the Louvre, where the coiffure of the Emperor Nero, in a bust, had attracted his attention."⁶⁰ Harris, speaking still of those earlier days, says flatly: "He looked like a Roman emperor of the decadence."⁶¹ De Regnier, somewhat less impressed, found his appearance in 1891 "proconsular,"⁶² but André Gide recalls more extravagant estimates of his appearance at that time:

His books amazed and charmed the reader. . . . He was rich; he was tall; he was handsome; swollen with good fortune and with honors. Some compared him to an Asiatic Bacchus;⁶³ others to some Roman emperor; others to Apollo himself—and the fact is that he was radiant.⁶⁴

Stuart Merrill—friend of both Wilde and George, it must be remembered—writing shortly thereafter of the Wilde of these days, gives a description even more evocative: "You saw him, gigantic, roseate, and smooth-faced, like a high priest of the moon in the time of Helio-gabalus, everywhere in Paris. . . ."⁶⁵ Most striking of all, however, are these reminiscences and reflections of Sherard:

In the case of Oscar Wilde, however, the love of extravagance appears to have been instinctive. He might endeavor to explain and palliate his folly . . . it remains certain that the mania of prodigality held him and drove him powerless to resist. There are, in J. Stuart Hay's masterly *Life of the Amazing Emperor Helio-gabalus*, many passages which, *mutatis mutandis*, seem strangely applicable to this case also. Indeed I will go so far as to say that, for a comprehension of the real Oscar Wilde, this book or Lampridius' *Life*, or other classical works which deal with the amazing Elagabalus might be studied with advantage. . . . Oscar Wilde's extravagance and eccentricity in dress find their parallel—*mutatis mutandis*—in that other marvellous boy who perished in pride. . . . It is quite possible that Oscar Wilde, who was steeped in the paganism of Greece and Rome, and to whom, no doubt, the career and character of the amazing emperor were . . . familiar . . . may instinctively have set out to imitate a per-

⁶⁰ R. H. Sherard, *The Real Oscar Wilde* (London: T. Laurie, 1916), p. 45.

⁶¹ Frank Harris, *Oscar Wilde* (New York: Brentano's, 1916), I, 92.

⁶² Henri de Regnier, "Souvenirs sur Oscar Wilde," *La Revue Blanche*, Tome IX, No. 61 (Dec. 15, 1895), p. 529.

⁶³ Here is a convolution for the questing mind. Herodian writes of Helio-gabalus that his beauty, as a boy in the temple at Emesa, was so great that "you might have compared him to the beautiful statues of Dionysus." And George's *Algabal*, reflecting on those days, dreams of vying again with the hermai: "Schmücke dich im weißen bade/ Daß er noch zum wettbewerbe/ Alle hermen vor sich lade." Cf. the author's article, "The Historical Content of Stefan George's *Algabal*," *Germanic Review*, XXIII (1948), 193-205.

⁶⁴ André Gide, *loc. cit.*, p. 403.

⁶⁵ Stuart Merrill, "Oscar Wilde," *La Plume*, 15 mars, 1893. Quoted from Marjorie Louise Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 89. "On l'a vu, gigantesque, glabre et rose, tel qu'un grand prêtre de la lune au temps d'Héliogabale, partout à Paris. . . ."

sonage who must have aroused in his mind, if all that is said is true, an extraordinary interest.⁸⁶

IV

These data are, I think, fascinating, but I am aware that they do not actually "prove" anything. Nevertheless, I shall venture to make a further suggestion. The name "Algabal" appears nowhere in George's cycle except on the title page. As I have demonstrated elsewhere,⁸⁷ the poems of the first section, "Im Unterreich," which are, precisely, richest in echoes of Villiers, of Baudelaire, of Huysmans, of Mallarmé,⁸⁸ have no connection with the history of the Emperor Heliogabalus. The historical references—and George, once his divining-rod had dipped, acquainted himself with all there was to know about Heliogabalus and selected only a few themes appropriate to his conception—are concentrated in the second part, "Tage," and in the third part, "Die Andenken." What I should like to suggest is that the poems of "Im Unterreich" represent the lowest substructure, so to speak, of *Algabal*; that they were taken in hand, possibly, before *Pilgerfahrten* had been given definitive form, certainly not long thereafter. The inception of *Algabal* proper, therefore, could well have come as late as the winter of 1891-1892, when George returned to Paris and—what shall one say?—when he could have met Wilde, seen Wilde, or read *Dorian Gray*, but must certainly have heard the Wilde legend.

It may still be that neither Wilde, nor *Dorian Gray*, nor the Wilde legend had anything to do with the conception of *Algabal*. But if that be so, then the fact that Heliogabalus-Wilde, in the flesh, and Heliogabalus-George, in a young poet's fancy, walked the world of Paris in the same days poses a coincidence worth preserving from oblivion.

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⁸⁶ Sherard, *The Real Oscar Wilde*, pp. 221 ff.

⁸⁷ *Germanic Review*, XXIII, 193-205.

⁸⁸ Cf. Duthie, *op. cit.*, pp. 230 ff., 251 ff.

REVIEWS

Charles du Bos and English Literature: A Critic and His Orientation. By ANGELO PHILIP BERTOCCHI. New York: King's Crown Press, Columbia University, 1949. Pp. viii + 285. \$3.75.

No French critic of the period between the two wars equals Charles du Bos in depth, in originality, and in cosmopolitan breadth. Thibaudet often appears superficial and ephemeral when compared with him, Jaloux seldom rose to the kind of mature critical study which bears rereading after twenty years, and Rivière died too young to have given the full measure of his insight and of his rare power to encourage younger writers.

Du Bos was not at his best when he dealt with French literature; with much of it, he felt little sympathy, especially with French poetry outside of Baudelaire, with the French sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, with Balzac, and with the whole "classical century," Pascal excepted. He hardly proved receptive to the talents of men younger than himself and unfortunately drew a line after Claudel, Gide, Proust, Maurois, and Mauriac. He seldom indulged in the discussion of technique and style. With all these limitations, however, Du Bos strikes us today as the deepest and often the most subtle literary sensibility of his generation. He did more than any other Frenchman to divert the obsession of his compatriots with the narrow Parisian literary scene. His most important studies were written on Goethe, Hofmannsthal, George, and even more on English writers: Byron, Shelley, Keats, Browning, George Eliot, Walter Pater.

Professor Bertocchi, through his remarkably thorough and penetrating volume, has won an eminent place in the very front rank of American comparative scholars. The range of his knowledge had to be, and is indeed, vast: philosophy, theology itself, theories of criticism, several literatures have to be marshaled if an adequate view of Charles du Bos is to be reached. Several pitfalls have to be avoided: for Du Bos is not always clear, his method cannot be reduced to any simple elements, sympathy is the first requisite to any fair understanding of him, but a sympathy which must not exclude dissent and occasional impatience. Du Bos's weakness, which is his style, is in danger of wielding a fascination over anyone who has read him long and studiously. Bertocchi has succeeded in writing a literary work, open to none of the strictures which many Ph.D. theses deserve. Not only is the book very maturely thought out and written with skill and grace, but it shows marked power of organization and a critical personality of the very first order.

Yet it was not easy to characterize Du Bos as a critic. The author has wisely adopted the method and the manner of his model. He has granted as little as possible to outward biography, dear to Sainte-Beuve, but rejected, with undeniable gain, by most important French critics since: for Sainte-Beuve too often seized only the perishable man and let all the rest elude him. He has descended inwardly into his model and attempted the history of a soul. "The true interpreter," wrote Du Bos, "must describe, not exactly the work before him, but the spiritual mood created by the work in the reader." Such creative criticism, the most ambitious but also the most valuable of all, especially distinguishes Bertocchi's work.

Du Bos is indeed one of the most truly creative critics of our century. He started from the concrete, from the senses, where any artistic appreciation must

start, and owed much, like his beloved English romantics, to a nervous system so sensitive that it perceived spirituality in the very sensation. He then proceeded, in Coleridge's famous phrase, "from outward forms to win the spirit and the life, whose fountain is within." He strove to reach essences and poured his own inner life into that of the author studied. Better than perhaps any other critic, Du Bos succeeded in rejecting all categories and dissecting devices and in approximating the creative *élan* which had set the work of genius in motion. For the most valuable thing in art and in life was, for Du Bos, exaltation: the ascending of a Keatsian "top of sovereignty," where the creative reader and the recreated writer joined in a supreme transcendence of temporality and in communion of souls.

Such a critical practice offers many perils. It can only be attempted with a few great men with whom the critic's spirit can converse and must needs leave out much literature of passing interest, undeserving of the critic's attention. It requires such richly endowed critics as may become almost the equals of the minds they contemplate. It leads to an emphasis on the "soul" of a writer, and occasionally to a preference for beautiful souls over greater artists and higher geniuses. The criticism of Du Bos was undoubtedly too lenient, to the taste of many of us, toward Browning (ranked almost on a par with Goethe), toward the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, toward *Marius the Epicurean*. We would take an even graver exception to the hyperbolic praise lavished by the Frenchman on Charles Morgan's novels, on Maurice Baring, and on Middleton Murry's early critical essays, promising as these indeed were. There was more "beauty of soul" in D. H. Lawrence than in Murry, and far more greatness in Joyce than in all the English novelists praised by Du Bos.

But the value of a critic is not to be judged by the number of mistakes committed by him. Bertocci is perhaps so fascinated by his hero that he refrains overmuch from setting off his limitations in clear outline. He does better, however, and traces the pilgrimage of one of the most truly spiritual men of our time through the "vale of soul-making." And he throws much light on the two main directions in which Du Bos's influence is most potent, ten years after his death. To him more than to any one else in France is due a deeper appreciation by the French of the finest values of English literature. Thanks to him also, some powerful blows were dealt the neo-classical creed which attempted to link seventeenth-century literature alone with spirituality and religion and which, in France with the followers of Maurras, in England with the ridiculous and uncritical acceptance of many of T. S. Eliot's pontifical dicta, tended to sever the moderns from the best part of their literary legacy: the nineteenth century, and particularly the romantic poets. Du Bos, an ardent Catholic and an *anima naturaliter christiana*, saw the mistake in repressing our own romanticism and the fallacy in mutilating our Western literatures because some excesses of romanticism and of aestheticism had repelled our fastidious taste. To him, the "spiritual poetry" of Shelley and Keats, the religion of the arts of Walter Pater were a surer path to true religion than the sermons of Lancelot Andrewes, the holy sonnets of Donne, or even George Herbert's and Richard Crashaw's occasionally touching but more often disappointing poetry.

HENRI PEYRE

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Edouard Estaunié, *The Perplexed Positivist*. By RUTH CARTER HOK. New York: King's Crown Press, Columbia University, 1949. Pp. 116. \$2.25.

In the Introduction (p. 6), Dr. Hok remarks that the intensity of Estaunié's portrayal of "the inner life" and "the penetrating force of his psychology" have been often noted, never explained. What constitutes their "dynamic power?" "What is Estaunié's secret?" The *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola.

Dr. Hok asserts (p. 7) that "a similarity between the Weeks and instructions for the Meditations, and the development and construction of Estaunié's novels and short stories can be traced." "Is it possible [she asks] that Estaunié employed Loyola's *Exercises* in much the same way that other writers have employed drugs and alcohol?" Despite her confidence that Estaunié did indeed use the *Exercises* as a drug, Dr. Hok anticipates resistance from her readers. Cautiously, she admits that she "can find in material available to her no citation from Estaunié to justify any categorical assertion about his conscious use of Loyola's method as a master plan for the production of his works." She is nevertheless much impressed by Maurice Barrès's testimony (in *Un homme libre*) that "Loyola's logical genius created a method capable of achieving prodigious results on the proudest souls."

The reviewer has found, in material recently made available to him, Estaunié's opinion of Loyola and Barrès. It cannot be said to lend credence to Dr. Hok's theory. Estaunié's review of *Un homme libre* (*Gazette Diplomatique*, May 23, 1889) began with these words:

M. Maurice Barrès vient de faire une découverte. Il a lu les *Exercices spirituels* de St-Ignace, et s'est aperçu que le fondateur célèbre des jésuites n'était pas précisément le premier venu en matière psychologique. J'ai malheureusement peur que M. Maurice Barrès ne se soit imaginé être le seul à avoir lu cet ouvrage fort et . . . dangereux, et que ce ne soit là la seule et unique raison d'être du livre assez indigeste qu'il publie aujourd'hui.

Had not the *Exercises* been written "avec une admirable mauvaise foi" and a "but fictif," they would not have conquered a single soul. "Ils auraient été brûlés, ou laissés dans un coin de bibliothèque à titre de spécimen d'aberration intellectuelle malsaine." Had Barrès realized what sort of book he had used for his point of departure, he would not have hesitated to give up writing his own. Barrès has tried to apply the methods of Saint Ignatius "en leur donnant pour prétexte non plus l'altruisme mais l'égoïsme, et la divinisation du moi, du même coup, tout ce qui rendait supportable les *Exercices spirituels* a disparu; comme il fallait s'y attendre, l'œuvre devient à la fois répugnante et légèrement ridicule."

The *Gazette Diplomatique* is an obscure, long-forgotten paper, and although it was known that Estaunié had written for it, no one seemed to have cared to find out just what he wrote about. Had Dr. Hok suspected the existence of the Barrès review, she could not have obtained a copy during the War.

Nor would it have been easy to locate copies of two all-Estaunié magazine issues listed in the Talvart and Place bibliography. In one of these, Estaunié explained his method of writing as follows:

Il y a deux conceptions: la Flaubérienne, et la Balzacienne qui est la mienne.

Flaubert construisait ses romans d'après un plan logiquement établi d'avance. Ses personnages agissent selon les données strictes de sa raison, aussi manquent-ils de vie, sauf peut-être dans *Madame Bovary*.

Je préfère la méthode de Balzac.

Ayant arrêté une idée générale, je cherche dans la vie des personnages, et une scène qui sera le point de départ de mon roman. Dès que je les ai trouvés,

j'écris sans plan déterminé. Lorsque je commence, je ne sais comment sera la conclusion. Pour l'un de mes romans, j'ai été amené à écrire quatre dénouements. Mes personnages vivent si intensément en moi, que je me laisse conduire par eux.

Quelquefois, ils me donnent un coup de chapeau en route, et alors, c'est fini, le roman est perdu. . . . (*La Revue des Visages* [March, 1928], p. 8.)

Estaunié speaks at great length of Balzac's method in an essay which Dr. Hok did read (*Le Roman est-il en danger?* 1925); in fact, the quotation above is a digest of one of the main points of his essay. Though he did not say in so many words that his method was the same as Balzac's, it is clear that he praises Balzac above all others. It has been said time and time again that Balzac was Estaunié's master. Did it not occur to Dr. Hok that the pupil might compose in the manner of his master? And, if Estaunié did not plan his individual novels, would he have been able to follow "a master plan for the production of his works"?

But this is not the only pertinent material that the author has missed; she has overlooked much that was to be found in the Widener Library where she worked. She has failed to list in her bibliography some of Estaunié's minor literary works which might well have concerned her topic. She has used fewer than thirty-five items on Estaunié; Thieme has more than twice that number; Talvart and Place, almost four times.

Meager as it is, one suspects that Dr. Hok was at some pains to make her bibliography as long as possible. Three items listed (one is a ten-line review) are not referred to anywhere else in the book. On page four, "two scientific works on electricity and telecommunication" by Estaunié are mentioned. Why then list but one in the bibliography? Since, on the same page, reference is made to "a critical study of Dutch artists," one is surprised that the title *Petits Maîtres* does not appear in the bibliography either. The only other reference to this very important book (p. 15) indicates that the author did not trouble herself to consult it. Hard to find in France as well as in this country, it may be borrowed from the Boston Public Library. As one who has attempted "to reconstruct Estaunié's philosophy with elements gleaned from his various books" (p. 7), Dr. Hok should find the Perplexed Positivist's attitude on science, as it is given in *Petits Maîtres*, stimulating.

Did the author know, by the time her book went to press, that Estaunié had died a Catholic, as Professors McNulty and Lombardi assert in *Ecrivains Modernes* (Boston: Heath, 1947)? Could this not at least have been mentioned in a prefatory remark?

Moreover, there is a document, to which Dr. Hok refers but once (in the notes and by a title it never had), that could only have been written by a man unquestionably convinced of the existence of God, indeed, only by a Catholic, as Daniel-Rops circumspectly but insistently insinuated in his introduction to *Roman et Province*, a posthumous collection of essays by Estaunié. There, in "Une Sainte au fond de son couvent," the man who wrote *L'Épave*, that most eloquent testament of agnosticism, pays humble tribute to Saint Theresa of Lisieux. It is curious that Dr. Hok, who has been very attentive to other writings of Daniel-Rops, made nothing of his introduction. It is even more curious that she was not struck by the fact that Estaunié gave public testimony of his belief in miracles five years before his death, his essay having originally appeared in 1937.

Dr. Hok's short account of Estaunié's life is, as she noted, "assembled from data found in the works on Estaunié by Daniel-Rops and Camille Cè" (p. 81);

yet, in the Acknowledgments, she expresses her appreciation to Professors Philippe Le Corbeiller and Fernand Baldensperger for their willingness to share with her certain of their experiences in Estaunié's environment. We are told that they "contributed much in establishing a background" for her study. Those who are familiar with what has been written on Estaunié's life will regret that this contribution was not brought into the foreground. Just what the author learned from these two witnesses is not ascertainable from her text.

It is curious that we find no mention of Professor Baldensperger's *La Littérature française entre les deux guerres* in this book. Dr. Hok, who is understandably concerned with the literary fate of Estaunié, could well have quoted Professor Baldensperger's opinion that Estaunié has a strong chance to survive many of his more spectacular contemporaries.

The author thanks Professor Justin O'Brien for many valuable suggestions but evidently found nothing quotable in the *Novel of Adolescence in France*, in which Professor O'Brien assigns an important place to *Un Simple*. From him, she could have learned the correct date of publication of the novel; probably repeating Daniel-Rops's error (*Les Quarantes: Edouard Estaunié*, p. 59), she gives it as 1888 in several instances. A date is a small matter, but the very point of an anecdote with which Dr. Hok must be thoroughly familiar is that *Un Simple* was not published that year. In 1888, Estaunié was upset (unduly, in the reviewer's opinion) by a similarity he saw in it to Maupassant's *Pierre et Jean*. For that reason he is supposed to have delayed publication until 1891.

Some of the comparisons made between the *Exercices* and Estaunié's twelve novels and two volumes of short stories depend on the order of the dates of publication. Did not Dr. Hok have any misgivings that the dates of composition might not agree with those of publication? And did it not occur to her that the date of a collection is not necessarily that of the individual pieces in it? She believes that in *Le Labyrinthe* (1924) Estaunié showed "an evident and surprising desire to repeat himself." On the next page (80), she continues: "Estaunié published three more works, *Le Silence dans la campagne*, *Tels qu'ils furent*, and *Madame Clapain* in which may be discerned the same attempt at repetition." Her explanation is that Estaunié had completed the fourth and final week of Loyola's *Exercices* when he wrote *L'Ascension de M. Baslèvre*, *L'Appel de la route*, and *L'Infirmes aux mains de lumière*. In order to continue to write with the same psychological power, there was nothing for him to do but to start over again on the sequence of meditations. How can Dr. Hok have been unaware that the short stories in *Le Silence dans la campagne* (1925) had been published separately long before *Le Labyrinthe*, which is supposed by her to mark the beginning of Estaunié's desire to repeat himself? The title story appeared in 1913, others in 1911 and 1914, and one goes back to 1896.

The author, evidently sharing the widespread feeling that to call a writer a naturalist is to stigmatize him, offers what she believes "may be a more satisfactory explanation of what is called Estaunié's period of naturalism." According to her, Estaunié followed Loyola's directions in the first Week and studied "Sin" by a "considering of contrary acts and habits" (p. 38). The result was his first four novels. *Un Simple* illustrates that "innate characteristics may ultimately produce unhappiness and even tragedy," while *Bonne-Dame* shows that "innate characteristics can be a source of great happiness." *L'Empreinte* and *Le Ferment* "also illustrate two possible solutions for the same set of circumstances."

Dr. Hok develops her point with ingenuity, but the reviewer prefers to

explain Estaunié's period of naturalism by quoting from Estaunié's letter to the Dutch critic, Byvanck—a letter not consulted by Dr. Hok. Wrote Estaunié (*De Gids* [May, 1892], p. 218): "First Flaubert was my model, afterwards Zola and Guy de Maupassant, then again Flaubert and now I swear by Balzac."

EDWARD HARVEY

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Shakespeare und der Tragödienstil seiner Zeit. By LEVIN L. SCHÜCKING. Bern: A. Francke Ag. Verlag, 1947. Pp. 184. s.fr. 7.50.

For many years Professor Schücking has worked under the spell of the great art historians, of Heinrich Wölfflin, of Michelet and Burckhardt, and with Hübscher and Weisbach and other German critics of Renaissance culture has variously endeavored to arrive at a concept of "form" in the Elizabethan tragedy as *Gestaltung antithetischen Lebensgefühls*, a literary phenomenon of style; in particular he has sought to explain Shakespeare in terms of something like a general physiognomy of the European mind of the period, always remembering, however, that sensations of horror, of the plentitude of power, of bitterness in the collapse of the *Weltanschauung* are expressed with the strongest possible display of passion and eccentricity in the English mentality. This recent study, *Shakespeare und der Tragödienstil seiner Zeit*, continues and enlarges his earlier work in the field. His subject is still the artist's debt to his time; his key-word is still "baroque."

It would be pointless here to argue the need or the validity or the questionable success of the critical terms this literary "cult of the bizarre" has drawn from the feelings and forms of the Baroque age. Schücking has himself expressed a mild lack of concern as to what one actually calls the phenomenon of style, the feeling for life, which interests him. But we may pause to regret that when he is content to identify the Baroque mentality with some half-dozen of its predicates, its more obvious ones at that, and to interpret Elizabethan tragic heroes in the light of these particular phenomena, he lays himself open to the charge of superficiality and fragmentation. I do not know how we can conscientiously talk of the nature of man, within the requirements of the baroque style of living, thinking, and building, or within the "art-will" of Elizabethan tragedy, and neglect the spiritual unrest, the religious principle and metaphysical renaissance, which gave unity and meaning to both; nor why we should want to. Psychological realism is not enough. To overlook even the disturbing dichotomies implicit in the theological problem of the fall of man and its subsequent personal sanctions is to limit seriously our understanding of the greatly tortured Elizabethan tragic heroes.

Schücking, however, always keeps his own position clear. He defines his terms, limits his field of interest exactly, and in the end confesses to incompleteness and warns us that his points of view have still to be refined. He is only concerned here, he tells us, in searching for "trends" in the more flamboyant aspects of the "baroque" feeling for life. In the heroic figures of Marlowe, Chapman, Webster, and Jonson he finds a common "exaggerated dynamic of the will"; in Kyd's Hieronimo and in Marston's Antonio, "exaggerated sensibility"; in the philosophical D'Amville, "paradoxical eccentricity"—in all of these characterizations a trend toward the "art-will" of the Baroque age.

Shakespeare, also addicted to surprising brutalities and exaggerated emotions, remained in remarkably close contact with his fellow playwrights and yet transcended their codes as he gave his heroes personal value and integrity.

It seems clear enough that Schücking's ideal goal of Baroque drama and stagecraft is closely analogous to Richard Wagner's theatrical *Gesamtkunstwerk*. These curious manifestations in the Elizabethan tragedy of the "*Ekstatisch-hyperbolisch-exzentrischen oder bizarren*" are therefore only a kind of pre-Baroque—a hideous *fortissimo*, we are told, truly indigenous and highly characteristic of the English nervous system, beyond much doubt the inevitable result of their atrocious weather conditions of March and November. The good professor would like to, but never quite does, free himself from Voltaire's long suspicion that the English are all mad anyway, or at the very least constitutionally as melancholy as Moor ditch or a gib-cat.

Students who have learned to accept with equanimity the borrowed terms of this school of criticism and their highly specialized applications will probably take great pleasure in this vigorous study; others will be glad to confess that Professor Schücking has done his work with no less scholarship than spirit, that he makes readily accessible a varied body of material illuminating certain aspects of our dramatic history, and that crammed as the book is with facts it is also notably readable. The style is always freshly invigorating, even exciting—perhaps we could say even baroque. We could well hope that the book will not suffer at the hands of some English translator the fate of the earlier *Der Sinn des Hamlet*.

E. AYERS TAYLOR

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Fair Rosamond: A Study of the Development of a Literary Theme. By VIRGIL B. HELTZEL. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Studies in the Humanities, No. 16, 1947. Pp. viii + 135. \$3.00.

Of England's royal mistresses, few have attained such literary fame, quantitatively at least, as Henry II's Fair Rosamond, and few have been so nearly entirely the creation of her celebrators.

The known facts of the affair are few. Early reporters like Giraldus Cambrensis said only enough to warrant that Henry did live "openliche in spouse-breche" with Rosamond Clifford, who was buried in Godstow nunnery, though not as a victim of Henry's Queen Eleanor. Fact, however, was eventually embroidered by relatively cautious chroniclers like Ranulf Higden, Robert Fabyan, and Richard Grafton, who enlarged upon incidental details, and by "common fame," which was more ready to assign motives and conflict, and which in turn influenced the chronicles (especially the melodramatic incidents in *The French Chronicle of London*). By the way, this chronicle got the wrong Queen Eleanor, though it was hardly as genially befuddled as Huck Finn's notion that Henry VIII ordered Jane Shore and Fair Rosamond fetched up and their heads chopped off in rapid succession. In what is to me the most interesting section of the book (Chapter I) Professor Heltzel traces more distinctly than has been done before the process by which the chronicles transformed the "camera Rosamundae" at Woodstock into a secret bower or labyrinth and lifted an epitaph from the sixth-century queen Rosamunda of the Lombards, while oral tradition

refined on suggestive incidents and reduced meager history to simple story by converting the naturally presumed jealousy of the queen into vengeful murder.

Up until sometime in the sixteenth century the fabrication is what Mr. Heltzel calls "the gradual accumulation of unhistorical accretions that clustered increasingly about the famous pair." With a good triangle situation and the durable paraphernalia of mazes, silken clues, and a marvelous coffer (and a dash of poison was soon to be added), the legend was launched on its literary career in the 1590's, and from here on it is clear sailing. Henceforth it is a question of the literary imagination fattening up a lean creature, adding new characters and plot complications until the core of the story is almost lost in a new labyrinth of historical, quasi-historical, and romantical-historical patterns, and running the gamut of the genres and their subtypes.

Altogether I fear that Fair Rosamond was more sinned against than sinning as she "captured the fancy of a few men of much, and many of little, literary talent" (p. vii). She was favored, it is true, with the attention of Daniel, Drayton, Addison, Tennyson, and Swinburne, but not always with their choicest gifts, and the preponderance of those who celebrated her had no great gifts to offer. Nevertheless we are carried through her verse narratives from William Warner (1592) to John Masefield (1931); prose fiction from seventeenth-century chapbooks through historical romances to E. O. Browne (1932); drama from John Bancroft (1692) to Russell G. Pruden (1938). Each of roughly fifty versions of her story is accorded impartial treatment by the author, who summarizes plots, notes borrowings, additions, and alterations of plot and character, and plainly demonstrates how a simple story can be made remarkably complex when it is treated over and over again for several centuries and when the absence of a clear source gives everyone a free hand, yet how at the same time it develops a fairly consistent tradition. (In the latter respect, the chapbooks and the ballads by Deloney and others are important as common carriers.) For those readers who may not wish to follow all the details, there are summaries of the various sections and a last chapter which puts the whole case admirably in brief.

We are thus given an exhaustive study of the manifold ways a literary theme may be handled, as far as manipulation of plot and *dramatis personae* are concerned. The natural limitation of such a study, when applied to literary artistry (by contrast with, say, folk material, where the study of the change of details gives real insight into the shaping ways of the popular imagination—as at the beginning of this book), is that it must ignore so many of the qualities that make literature variegated, interesting, and important, or otherwise. "Thematology" does not here, I think, render up much of "the creative processes of literary craftsmen," as the Preface claims, and it may promote literary non-entities to prominence because they redirected old themes or ingeniously contrived new ones, as if the writer's art were chiefly exercised by devising variations of plot. Thus Drayton's work, with no real plot though with many fine conceits, is depressed to insignificance, and Addison's opera, devoid of real merit though no sillier than opera librettos are expected to be, is elevated because it first gave the story a happy turn of events. But such is the occasional topsy-turvydom of disinterested scholarship.

BRANFORD P. MILLAR

Michigan State College

On the Composition of Paradise Lost: A Study of the Ordering and Insertion of Material. By ALLAN H. GILBERT. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947. Pp. x + 185. \$3.50.

Paradise Lost as a narrative poem has never before been subjected to so close an analysis as it receives in this challenging and speculative volume. Professor Gilbert's theory of non-*seriatim* composition is not new, but his specific assignment of the parts of the poem to particular stages of composition will link his name to the hypothesis as long as Milton is studied. His contention is that when Milton decided to cast *Paradise Lost* into an epic, he worked into the poem materials held over from the abandoned plans for a tragedy on the subject, adding to and altering the old matter as necessary. Traces of these modifications remain in the inconsistencies of the narrative and the characterization, and these supply the proof of saltatory composition.

The book is sharply focused and concisely written. Chapter 1 reviews the evidence on Milton's known habits of work, the previous theories of disjunctive composition, and the significance of the four drafts for a tragedy. Chapter 2 sets forth correspondences between these drafts and the Arguments to the twelve books and differences between the Arguments and the books themselves. Chapter 3 devotes nine sections to passages influenced by the tragedies; the last of these, "The Two Satans," attempts to show that Satan has not one character that deteriorates but two that are distinct and static: "the guileful tempter of the Garden," derived from the tragedies, and the "sultan over a host of giants," an epic conception. Chapter 4, "The Middle Epic Shift of the War in Heaven," advances the no less startling theory that originally the war in Heaven and the creation were neither related by Raphael nor in their present positions, but in chronological order. Section 25 of Chapter 5 offers a table of the material and the arrangement of *Paradise Lost* before its shift from that order. Chapter 6 assigns as late epic material some fifteen incidents and passages, of which the late introduction of Abdiel is most persuasively argued. Chapter 7 deals with miscellaneous inconsistencies and insertions that suggest non-*seriatim* composition. Chapter 8 includes a brief report of the disjunctive composition of the *Aeneid*, the *Orlando Furioso*, and the *Faerie Queene*, a table showing the probable order of composition of *Paradise Lost*, and some conclusions on Milton's process with the poem.

It is clear from even this brief outline that every Miltonist must have his own copy of this book and must examine every page of it with care. No reader will accept all the suggested inconsistencies as proved nor all the conclusions drawn from them as valid. Some of the faults found will seem more like quibbles. Also, many students will wish to debate further such an important conclusion as the attempted distinction between the two Satans; to some it will be too pat, too mechanically drawn to be convincing. But there can be no doubt about the proof for the major thesis of saltatory composition and the corollary example of the shifted arrangement of the war in Heaven. The table showing sequence in composition is a brilliant reconstruction which will promote much discussion. With this extraordinary book, Professor Gilbert has put us all in his debt.

KESTER SVENDSEN

University of Oklahoma

The Epigram in the English Renaissance. By HOYT HOPEWELL HUDSON. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1947. Pp. viii + 178. \$2.50.

The Epigram in the English Renaissance marks the end of Professor Hoyt Hudson's career as a student of the Renaissance and stands as a fit monument to his scholarship. The fruit of two decades of research and reflection on the materials of his research are contained in his last book. It is unfortunate that he was not able to complete the manuscript; the book, as it now stands, consists of only three chapters and part of the fourth chapter, and represents less than a fourth of the book Professor Hudson intended. Had he been able to finish it in the manner in which it was begun and with full use of the evidence he had already accumulated, it would have been, without doubt, the definitive treatment of the subject.

By expanding the definition of the epigram given in the *New English Dictionary*: "A short poem ending in a witty or ingenious turn of thought, to which the rest of the composition is intended to lead up," by the addition of a phrase derived from his study of Renaissance rhetoric: "or sententious comment," Professor Hudson is able to encompass the theory and practice of the Renaissance epigram. In addition, he briefly compares the epigram to the other genres with which it is allied, though a fuller analysis of the relationship of the epigram to satire would have been desirable.

Sir Thomas More's epigrammatic writings are treated in the second chapter where Professor Hudson states that the history of epigram writing in England properly starts with More. Particularly valuable are his account of More's controversy with the French writer of Latin poetry Brixius and his survey of More's influence on English and continental writers of the epigram, a hitherto neglected aspect of the transmission of humanist thought. Professor Hudson then turns to a study of the work of the scholarly epigrammatists after More and rescues from obscurity the epigrams of more than a dozen writers, of whom John Parkhurst is considered the most important. The final chapter is an uncompleted study of the epigram in the schools and colleges. As might be expected, the academic epigram is often school-boyish, pedantic, and heavy-handed, though it throws an interesting light on the educational practices and standards of the day.

Professor Hudson had intended to bring his history of the epigram down to its modern development in prose, and what failures the book has must be attributed to its incomplete state. For the epigram needs to be treated not only as a literary genre, which is Professor Hudson's main emphasis, but also as an example of the way in which the Renaissance took over a classical body of materials and reshaped it to its own uses. Since the genre was practically untouched by medieval influences, it is a particularly good case study of the process by which the Renaissance molded its classical heritage. Of the manner in which the classics influenced the Renaissance mind we have many studies, but of the reverse process, the way in which the Renaissance selected particular aspects of classical thought for its own special uses, and the reasons for such choices, we stand in need of much more information before we can properly understand the motivations and mode of operation of the Renaissance mind.

Special thanks must be given to Professors W. S. Howell of Princeton University, Everett L. Hunt of Swarthmore College, and Francis R. Johnson of

Stanford University for their generosity in seeing Professor Hudson's book through the press, and to the Princeton University Press for giving him such a lasting monument.

HERBERT WEISINGER

Michigan State College

Elizabethan Poetry in the Eighteenth Century. By EARL R. WASSERMAN. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. XXXII, Nos. 2-3, 1947. Pp. 292. \$2.50.

This book presents some new data on an old problem. As a study of eighteenth-century attitudes toward Elizabethan non-dramatic poetry, it parallels studies of Shakespeare and other dramatists on the Restoration and eighteenth-century stage and supplements previous investigations of Spenser, Jonson, Donne, and Milton in the poetry, scholarship, and criticism of the neo-classical period. More broadly, insofar as Mr. Wasserman uses his data to illustrate general tendencies in eighteenth-century thought and taste, his book resembles that of Manwaring or Hussey on the picturesque, of Monk on the sublime, Wellek on literary historiography, Swedenberg on epic theory, and others. As in all such studies, the intention is to increase our understanding of standard neo-classicism and to tell some part of the story of its decline or transformation in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

The first chapter is on criticism of the Elizabethans, especially during the first half of the century. No one is likely to quarrel with Wasserman's main contention, that early students of the period exaggerated neo-classical "neglect and contempt" of the Elizabethans. His conception of neo-classical criticism is an improvement on the accounts given—almost forty years ago now—by Phelps and Beers, since he recognizes that eighteenth-century theory demanded both nature and art, both fancy and judgment. But he has not rid himself of the notions, which Dryden, Addison, Pope, and Johnson explicitly and repeatedly deny, that criticism in this period was rigid, rigorous, and wholly deductive (pp. 27, 39, 49), gave attention to form alone (pp. 25, 45), focused mainly on faults (pp. 35, 49, 108), condemned suspension of disbelief (p. 98), and so forth. As a result, he finds an "unreconciled dualism" in critics who praise the "solid Sense, proper Language, and beautiful Figures" of some Elizabethan poet but deplore his lack of art (p. 43; cf. pp. 47-48, 181, 220). This chapter seems to me the weakest part of the book.

The rest of the book develops the antithesis between nature and art which was established in the opening chapter. Chapters II, III, and IV, while quoting some writers late in the eighteenth century, are concerned for the most part with examples of the standard neo-classical attitude. The final chapter, on the "Elizabethan 'Revival,'" treats editors, critics, and poets who admired or imitated the manner as well as the matter of Elizabethan writers. Under this interpretation of the period, real change occurs only when the Elizabethans are praised for their artistry, as composing poetry of a distinct kind, not merely for their substance.

The second chapter is the shortest and clearest in the book. It is concerned with modernizations or "improvements" of Elizabethan poetry. Wasserman illustrates this process of rhythmical and syntactical revision from editions, which sometimes make such changes even when the editor claims to have collated texts, from confessed modernizations like Pope's version of Donne, and

from "imitations" or free paraphrases of older poems. Since eighteenth-century art includes more than grammar and versification, Wasserman claims too much for such revisions when he says that "from them alone a comprehensive handbook of neoclassic poetic practices could be compiled" (p. 60). But his material is interesting and is very neatly presented.

Chapter III is on Shakespeare and Spenser. Wasserman's narrative is somewhat clogged and confused in this long chapter by his attempt to separate several different conceptions of Spenser, but the distinction is important and valuable. His analyses of Thomson's *Castle of Indolence* (pp. 110-12), Shennstone's *Schoolmistress* (pp. 112-14), and Beattie's *Minstrel* (pp. 121-22, 130-34) are excellent. Chapter IV, which overlaps to some extent the second chapter, shows that Elizabethan lyrics continued to be read throughout the neo-classical period, were frequently "improved" and imitated, and in the long run "helped lead to the efforts to reproduce the style and manner of the Elizabethan lyric in the closing decades of the century" (p. 191).

The final chapter has four main divisions, treating eighteenth-century conceptions of Renaissance culture, the emergence in scholars like Thomas Warton of an historical approach to Elizabethan literature, the "development of the romantic view" in such editors and critics as Percy, Woodhouselee, and Headley, and the scattered attempts, late in the century, to reproduce Elizabethan poetic style.

This concluding chapter has no clear-cut *terminus ad quem*, such as Kant provides in Monk's book, or Thomas Warton in Wellek's. The main emphasis falls on Henry Headley's *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry* (1787), an anthology of minor poems from Wyatt and Surrey to Davenant. While he concedes that Headley, with all the "more temperate eighteenth-century critics," was really looking only for poetry that was "correctly wild" (pp. 230-31), Wasserman nevertheless contends in other places that Headley "documented in full the romantic interpretation," established "the critical mode for the romantics," etc. (pp. 228, 229). It is true, as Headley says in his preface, that his two volumes "strengthen and co-operate with that taste for poetical antiquities which for some time past has been considerably advancing" (first ed., 1787, I, vii). For the moment at least, they culminate the movement which made the Elizabethan poets familiar to the general reader. But there is little that is new in Headley, and as for admiring the artistry of the Elizabethans, he says himself, in a passage which Wasserman does not quote:

One of the most material requisites in our older poets is oeconomy, which is to composition, precisely what conduct is to life; we are frequently palled by an opulence of description, an exuberance of imagery, and a maze of allegory, without any relief whatever, unless by imbecillities prolix, uninteresting, and vulgar in the extreme. This inequality of parts pervades antiquity, a judicious regard to the distribution of ornament, the art of blending the brilliant with the chaste, of softening strength of colours with mild and corrective shades, together with the niceties of method, connection, and arrangement, are the tardy and perhaps most valuable produce of later times (I, xxviii).

Headley deserves credit for an interesting and intelligent book, which undoubtedly helped to popularize poets like Drummond, King, Daniel, Drayton, and the two Fletchers, but he figures very lamely as the climax of this long and intricate story. Wasserman's narrative lacks an adequate and convincing resolution.

The strength of this book lies in its wealth of new and accurately recorded data, which supplement previous studies of Elizabethan poetry in the neo-classical period. Its weakness, as in so many such books, is in definition, inter-

pretation, and generalization. It is more a chronicle than a true intellectual history, and it does not greatly advance our understanding either of neo-classicism or of its decline and fall.

HOYT TROWBRIDGE

University of Oregon

Poetical Works of William Wordsworth. Edited by E. DE SELINCOURT and HELEN DARBISHIRE. Volume IV. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947. Pp. xvi + 490. \$7.50.

This impeccable piece of editorial work continues under the aegis of Miss Darbishire in a manner for which the late Professor de Selincourt could have nothing but praise. The third volume, following Wordsworth's own arrangement, brought the publication of the poems through the Ecclesiastical Sonnets. The present volume carries the work through the remaining shorter poems and fittingly concludes with the great *Ode, Intimations of Immortality*.

Besides the *Ode*, Volume IV contains the *Evening Voluntaries*, *Itinerary Poems of 1833*, *Poems of Sentiment and Reflection*, *Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty and Order*, *Miscellaneous Poems*, *Inscriptions*, *Selections from Chaucer*, *Poems Referring to the Period of Old Age*, and the *Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces*. The two appendixes contain Wordsworth's translation in heroic couplets of the *Aeneid*, Books I-III (together with three other Virgilian fragments totaling fifty-nine lines); and a group of thirty-six other poems either never printed before (there are fifteen of these), or not included in the edition of 1849-1850, the last to pass under Wordsworth's eyes. The *apparatus criticus* records variant readings from five manuscripts as well as changes made by Wordsworth from edition to edition. Of particular importance in this connection were the Longman manuscripts, comprising *Lyrical Ballads* (1800-1805) and *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807); and MS 101, a large folio notebook dating from 1820 onwards and containing "drafts of poems in process of composition." The critical and biographical notes fill eighty-four pages at the end of the book, and there is an index of titles and first lines.

Although the fifteen poems here first printed will not materially alter Wordsworth's reputation—they include an Englishing of Chaucer's *Manciple*, sundry translations, album inscriptions, and epitaphs—two are worth special notice: a 28-line blank verse poem on a distant prospect of St. Paul's in a snowstorm, worthy of being placed beside the Westminster Bridge sonnet, and eight graceful lines, probably composed in 1841, containing a valuable statement of Wordsworth's poetic credo:

Let more ambitious Poets take the heart
By storm, my Verse would rather win its way
With gentle violence. . . .

Editorial corrections in Wordsworth's final text, offered in a few instances on manuscript authority, are trifling. With a single exception none of the famous poems in the volume is affected. The exception, however, is important in that it slightly emends the great *Ode*. In modern editions, line 69 reads as follows: "But He beholds the light, and whence it flows." The difficulty has been that this ordering leaves unrhymed the word "infancy" in line 66. The emendation, made by Wordsworth's own hand in readying the Longman manuscript for the press, consists in dividing line 69 after the first two words, so that the word "He" provides a terminal rhyme for "infancy," while the rest of the original line becomes a new line 70.

Like preceding volumes in this edition, the present text, with its valuable notes and variants, will be indispensable to the Wordsworth scholar. Volume V, now in progress, will contain *The Excursion*, together with some unpublished passages of blank verse which appear to the editor to be related either to *The Prelude* or to *The Excursion*.

CARLOS BAKER

Princeton University

Goethe's Botany: The Metamorphosis of Plants (1790) and Tobler's Ode to Nature (1782). By AGNES ARBER. Waltham, Massachusetts: The Chronica Botanica Company; New York: G. E. Stechert and Company, Vol. 10, No. 2, Summer, 1946. Pp. 63 + 126. \$2.00.

The excellent papers on Goethe and science read at the meeting of the Modern Language Association of America at Stanford University in September, 1949, and the emphasis on Goethe's extraliterary activities during the Bicentennial Conference at Aspen, Colorado, prompt this reference to Agnes Arber's contribution to a proper evaluation of Goethe's interest in the field of botany.

Mrs. Arber's translation of Goethe's *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* is thoroughly accurate, and her essay on Goethe's botanical studies supersedes all previous publications on this subject, even the monumental work by Adolph Hansen, *Goethes Metamorphose der Pflanzen* (Giessen, 1907).

Goethe's interest in plants was more than a hobby or an avocation. It is the basis of many of his concepts and pervades many of his other interests. Mrs. Arber's essay throws new light on the larger questions of Goethe's interpretation of nature and of life. Her command of German, her authoritative position in the history of botanical research, her lucid and logical style of writing, and her careful analysis of Goethe's interest in natural phenomena and his observations of structural development in plants make this publication a "must" for everyone interested in Goethe's habits of life and thought. Attention may be called to a review by Heinrich Meyer in the *Monatshefte*, XXXVIII (1946), 504-05.

With characteristic precision and fine determination, Mrs. Arber appended to her translation of the *Metamorphose* her own translation of the ode to nature which Goethe authorized for publication in the *Ausgabe Letzter Hand* and which appeared in 1833 under the title "Die Natur, Aphoristisch" as an invocation to a volume of his scientific writings. Although Goethe could not recall having written this ode, and although he did not actually write it, it must have appealed to him as it does to us as a crystallization of "the phase through which his scientific philosophy was struggling in the years immediately preceding the experience of happy enlightenment which found expression in the *Metamorphose*."

FRANK H. REINSCH

University of California, Los Angeles

The Testament of Werther in Poetry and Drama. By STUART PRATT ATKINS. Cambridge: Harvard University Studies in Comparative Literature, Vol. XIX, 1949. Pp. xii + 322. \$4.50.

Why Goethe's *Werther* "has been regarded by an overwhelming proportion of its readers as a sentimental novel, and frequently as the quintessence of sentimentality even by many of the discriminating [is] . . . the main, if by no

means only, theme" of Professor Atkins' study, which had its inception over a decade ago as a doctoral dissertation at Yale in a semi-bibliographical survey of Werther plays and poems. The focus of the present work is shifted to "an evaluation of the effect of imitation and notoriety upon the interpretation" of *Werther* itself.

In the past most of our knowledge of Werther fame has been based on the host of Werther novels, rather exclusively by mediocrities, that sprang up here and everywhere. The limitation of Mr. Atkins' study to poetry and drama is qualitatively more important and leads to a quite different literary history of the subject.

Werther hit England at a time when literary production there was at a low ebb, and was greeted with as immediate and intense popularity as in Germany, largely because it was merely an importation of sentimentality previously exported to Germany. The English poets then active found a new poetic stimulus in Werther, and more Werther poems were written in English than in any other tongue. But English popularity lasted only briefly, while German Werther poetry (a chapter hitherto not treated historically and comprehensively, and one containing fine critical observations) went on for decades. The conservative nature of contemporary French poetry proved an unwelcome host to *Werther*, and it remained for the French romantics to appreciate its idealism while the English romantics cast it aside as past history. Obviously, then as today, a best-selling novel was bound to be dramatized, and in this regard Germany showed the greatest productivity, but, as Mr. Atkins notes, "only when the playwrights disregarded the character of Werther . . . in Goethe's novel did they . . . achieve dramatic movement or . . . suspense." Perhaps one of the best results in Germany of Werther imitation was a strong resistance to imitation per se. One interesting fact comes forth: England, during its Werther decade, had the lowest suicide rate for a century and a half.

Mr. Atkins has drawn a lucid trail across the shifting sands of Werther criticism, notoriety, imitation, and fame. If any reader henceforth sees in *Werther* "only a sentimental novel," that will be evidence he has not had the pleasure and profit of reading Mr. Atkins' study.

Only two misprints were noted: *market* for "marker" (p. 27), and footnote 3 for "37" (p. 172). The question as to where to place chapter notes seems a difficult one—the reviewer frankly prefers footnotes as less of a nuisance to the reader. He also prefers to normalize "ss" and "sz" to "ß."

CURTIS C. D. VAIL

University of Washington

Goethe: The Sorrows of Young Werther. The New Melusina. Novelle. Introduction by VICTOR LANGE. New York and Toronto: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1949. Pp. xx + 195. \$0.50.

Professor Lange has made available for us in one of the attractive "Rinehart Editions" the second version of *Werther* in the 1854 Boylan translation, which he has "thoroughly revised and in many respects rewritten," together with his own translation of the *Novelle*, and Jean Starr Untermeyer's translation of the *Neue Melusine*. Over a dozen pages of introduction serve to orient the reader to the works which follow, and there is a short but useful bibliographical note.

Without such labors of love as this, the numerous critical works that have appeared during this Goethe year would of necessity operate largely in a vacuum.

CURTIS C. D. VAIL

University of Washington

FRANZ KAFKA, *Gesammelte Schriften*. Herausgegeben von Max Brod. Bd. 1: *Erzählungen und kleine Prosa*. Zweite Ausgabe. Pp. 287. Bd. 2: *Amerika*. Dritte Ausgabe. Pp. 315. Bd. 3: *Der Prozeß*. Dritte Ausgabe. Pp. 287. Bd. 4: *Das Schloß*. Dritte Ausgabe. Pp. 429. Bd. 5: *Beschreibung eines Kampfes. Novellen. Skizzen, Aphorismen aus dem Nachlaß*. Zweite Ausgabe. Pp. 336. New York: Schocken Books, 1946. \$3.00 per volume.

Den Großteil seiner Schriften verurteilte Franz Kafka letztwillig zur Vernichtung, und wir verdanken den Fortbestand dieser eigenständigen und schwerwiegenden Gebilde einem Vertrauensbruch.

Der Schocken Verlag legt die ersten fünf Bände seiner Gesamtausgabe der Schriften Kafkas, die 1931-1936 erschienen, in erweitertem Nachdruck vor. Hinzugekommen sind drei kleine Rezensionen Kafkas als Ergänzung des ersten Bandes, einige bisher unveröffentlichte Schlußzeilen des Romans *Das Schloß* nebst zwei Textvarianten im Nachwort zum vierten Band, und der Fragmente zu *Bau der chinesischen Mauer*, *Jäger Gracchus* und *Bericht für eine Akademie*, die früher an anderer Stelle standen und jetzt sinngemäß im Anhang zum fünften Bande Aufnahme gefunden haben.

Der Verlag kündigt weitere fünf Bände an, die Tagebücher, Briefe und Fragmente und Aphorismen enthalten sollen. Die Editionstechnik dieser Bände wird das Urteil über den Wert des Gesamtunternehmens entscheiden. Der vorliegende Teil berechtigt schon zu der Feststellung, daß den wissenschaftlichen Ansprüchen des Philologen nicht vollauf Genüge getragen worden ist. Noch immer erscheint der Text in normalisierter Form. Noch immer besteht der Herausgeber auf seinem Vorrecht, unter verschiedenen Fassungen wählen zu dürfen, und man gewinnt kaum einen Einblick in Kafkas Arbeitsweise, die durch vielfache Überarbeitung gekennzeichnet ist. Von hier aus wäre wertvollsten Einsichten vorzuarbeiten gewesen. Lesartenapparat und historisch-kritische Anmerkungen bleiben Desiderata. Der Gesamteindruck des Verlagswerkes ist der einer geschmackvollen Leseausgabe, und man freut sich des Wiedersehens mit diesen Büchern, deren Herstellung in der neuen Welt nach zweimaligem Verlagsortwechsel und zweimaliger Verlegung der Herausgebereitigkeit zu der unheimlichen Vermutung anregt, das Schicksal habe bisher Kafkas Bücher zu Beweisstücken für die in ihnen niedergelegte Weltauffassung auserlesen, indem ein scheinbar widersinniges Verhängnis sie mit eiserner Folgerichtigkeit zur Heimatlosigkeit unter friedlosen und ungesicherten Verhältnissen verdammt. In diesem Sinne gebühren dem Verlag und dem Herausgeber doppelter Dank für ihre mutige Treue.

FRANZ RENÉ SOMMERFELD

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Scholars will rejoice to learn that two long-established foreign journals suspended during war time are resuming publication:

ANGLIA:

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR ENGLISCHE PHILOGIE

and

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR ROMANISCHE PHILOGIE

The 69th volume of *ANGLIA*, the old German periodical of English Philology, will appear at the end of this year. It will consist of four parts, which are to be published as far as possible at regular intervals. Articles on the History of Language should be sent to Professor Hermann M. Flasdieck, of the University of Heidelberg (Bergheimerstr. 51); on English and American Literature to Professor Helmut Papajewski, of the University of Cologne, or to Professor Walter F. Schirmer, of the University of Bonn. Prospective contributors are advised to make preliminary inquiry before mailing their manuscripts. Book reviews will henceforth be included with the regular issues. Books dealing with English Philology intended for review should be forwarded to the Neomarius Verlag, Wilhelmstr. 18, Tübingen. The price per volume is DM 42; for single issues DM 12.

The *ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR ROMANISCHE PHILOGIE*, under the editorship of Professor Walther von Wartburg of Basel, starts with Volume LXV, Heft 1-3, and will continue the custom of its founder Gustav Gröber in limiting its field of research to the whole group of Romance Languages and the older literature of the Romance folk down to about 1650. While the emphasis will be as formerly on comprehensive investigations of far-reaching problems, place will be found for short articles. It is proposed when the difficulties ease up to undertake again the compilation of yearly bibliographies, which will fall to the direction of Professor Alwin Kuhn of Marburg. Each volume of this journal will be made up of six Heft. The volume price is DM 45.

Manifestly these periodicals will labor under the heaviest kind of strain; therefore it is hoped that a generous response in subscriptions will be forthcoming.

